

ROME,
AND ITS SURROUNDING SCENERY.

ENGRAVED BY W. B. COOKE,

From Drawings by .

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WITH DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

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PREFACE.

THE following remarks and reflections, made during a winter's residence in Rome, are extracts from an unpublished journal kept during a recent tour through a large portion of the south of Europe. Many of the subjects which most usually attract the attention of the antiquary, the historian, or the poet, in a sojourn among the palaces and ruins of the Eternal City, have been, perhaps, too slightly touched upon; but Italy has sat for her portrait so frequently, and the grand outline is so well known, that I have sought novelty in minor traits, rather than repaint the leading features, which have been so often portrayed by master hands. If, therefore, my effort has developed any new, though trivial, grace, or kindled any new association, however slight, they must be my excuse for the very imperfect sketches now given to the public.

Embodied as they are, however, by the pencils of gifted artists, and the eminent graver of Mr. W. B. COOKE, they cannot fail to claim some share of interest from all who have felt the influence of the name—the climate—the story of Italy.

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PROMENADES IN ROME.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARRIVAL—THE WALLS—THE PINCIO.

IN our earliest thirst for travel, Italy is the magnetic point to which our longings are most powerfully directed. Paris, with its theatres, its turmoil of society, its endless gaieties—the Rhine, with its teeming legend and castellated crags, its “cloud-capp’d towers” and lofty battlements—Switzerland, with its lakes and its glaciers—and even Spain, with its romance and its Alhambra, cannot be fully appreciated till the craving for Italy has been satiated. I have often watched the tourist in Switzerland, admiring with but a hurried and compulsory admiration—an admiration wrested from him by the majesty of nature; quite different to the spontaneous devotion paid to the first clod of Italian soil, which he is so anxious to reach that he cannot enjoy the present.

During a visit to the Mount St. Bernard, I witnessed a peculiar display of this feeling. A party of young Englishmen, properly wrought upon by the sublimity of the scene, and discussing with becoming admiration the stupendous exploit of the modern Hannibal, of which it is the arena, forgot in a moment all the legitimate associations of the spot, upon being told that the Italian frontier was scarce a hundred yards distant: they rushed forward, passed the boundary-mark, and were in—Italy; and though knee-deep in snow, and surrounded by the dense grey atmosphere that frequently shrouds the summits of the Alps, imagined a moderated temperature and purer air—it was actually Italy; and there is a magic in the name alone, that, to an ardent imagination, fills out the dream of genial climate and cerulean skies. They had not resolution to return

to the Valais, and prosecute their route by the Simplon, as originally intended, but hurried at once to the land of promise, by the difficult and much less beautiful pass of St. Bernard.

Italy, with its azure skies, its glowing clime, its music, its classic story—its ruins—is the Mecca of the European wanderer; and in Italy, Florence and Rome are the two names that exercise the greatest influence over the cultivated mind; Florence, as the mother of modern civilization, with its poetry and arts; but still more Rome, as the mother of Florence.

To the mere voluptuary, Naples is a point, perhaps, of still greater attraction, but to the refined and sensitive mind Rome is the great magnet; even Florence, the city of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, that glorious triumvirate of intellect, fails to arrest the traveller, beyond a hasty survey, till he has trodden the streets of Rome; the eternal city—the mother of nations. Such, at all events, was my own feeling, and I heard many travelling in Italy at the same time express similarly excited sentiments.

I shall never forget my anxiety, as the distance grew short between me and the dethroned capital of the world: the miles across the dreary campagna seemed interminable; the horses, though stimulated to a gallop by the spur of the bribed postilion, appeared to crawl; and the delays at Baccana, the last miserable post-station, leaving scarce fifteen miles more to accomplish, put my patience to the utmost stretch of endurance. Passing the still more wretched Baccanaccia,* and gaining the ridge of high ground above, the first glimpse of the city is obtained. Beyond the (on this side) uneven expanse of the campagna, from the deep blue line of the horizon, appear, still more deeply blue, the almost countless domes and cupolas of Rome: the vision is, however, soon lost, for the road descends again to the more level plain; but every thing, except cultivation, now begins to tell us that we are closely nearing the goal of our long and highly wrought expectation. The milestones, with their superscription, “Via Cassia,” inform us that we are actually on the Cassian way; and some ancient tombs, amongst others that of Nero, and many architectural fragments of precious marbles, though not so numerous on this as on the southern side of Rome, all whisper that we are approaching a spot where human power and human art have been rife in other times; yet nothing proclaims the approach to a city, *still* the busy abode of man. The desert campagna presents no marks of cultivation; the only traces of industry are ruins; in short, the approach seems like one to a

* Ugly Baccana.

deserted city in a wilderness, whose crumbling walls and falling palaces appear shadowed forth in the suburban wreck we are traversing: we are led for a time to compare it to Palmyra, surrounded with, and now rapidly sinking beneath, the sands of the desert.

One or two more glimpses of the city are obtained as we proceed, but no general view; and all hopes of such a coup-d'œil are lost, when we pass down a deep descent, bringing us to the lowest part of the plain, upon the banks of the Tiber. I had crossed the Tiber before, a few miles to the south of Perugia, but there it was a mere brawling brook, like any other mountain stream near to its source, dashing about its clear water in its rocky shallow bed, without any of the majesty with which my imagination had invested the classic stream. I now stood upon the borders of a deep and rapid river, capable of awakening all the associations connected with its name; it was truly the "Flavum Tiber" that rolled at my feet, and as I re-entered the carriage to cross the bridge, I felt with the impassioned De Stael, "*Que c'est un des plaisirs de Rome que de dire, allons au Tibre, traversons le Tibre.*"

This bridge is now called Ponte Molle, a name corrupted in the middle ages from *Emilius* to *Milvio*, and thence curtailed to *Molle*; scarcely any thing, however, remains of the *Pons Æmilius*, originally built by the Censor *Æmilius Scæurus*, in the year of Rome 645, which was nearly destroyed in the great battle between Constantine and Maxentius, in the fourth century of the Christian era, when it was only repaired with wood, and so remained during the troubles which soon followed Constantine's division of the empire. It was reserved for the Popes, a new race of Cæsars, who, with very different arms, made Rome a second time mistress of the civilized world, to re-construct the bridge of *Emilius*; and Nicholas V., about the year 1450, caused it to be rebuilt in stone, making use of part of the ancient piers, which still remain. Many alterations, repairs, and additions, were made by the successors of Nicholas, but Pius VII. caused it to be reduced to its present form, under the direction of his architect, *Il Cavalier Valadier*, who, in 1815, removed the tower which defended the northern entrance, and substituted the present handsome gateway. It is strange how the near approach to Rome stirs up the antiquarian propensity, and I find that I am not exempt from its influence, having been already led away from my direct route, by an archæological digression on this subject of the Ponte Molle; but it is an interesting spot—here Cicero arrested the conspirators on their way to the camp of Cataline; and here too, Constantine saw, or imagined, that miraculous vision of the cross, that ratified the triumph of Christianity.

Passing the bridge, we advanced upon Rome by a straight, flat, and now paved road, at the end of which, two miles distant, appeared the Porta del Popolo, the Flaminian gate. The principal entrance to Rome was at length before us, actually in view, and all eyes were intently fixed upon the yet indistinct mass, as we rolled rapidly along. Indeed, had we been disposed to divert our attention from the object of such long and ardent expectation when it was at length placed before us, we had no temptation to do so; for the road now becomes enclosed between the high walls of gardens or vineyards on each side, and continues so till within a very short distance of the gate. No buildings present themselves as we approach, indicative of the suburb of a great city; a few paltry osterias alone break the monotony of the successive walls of a garden or vigna, until at length a rich fountain on the left, of that florid and grandiose architecture that is only met with in Italy, and a small church or two, in a tolerably good style, give the first indication of such buildings as usually mark the line of approach to a great city. Rome has no suburbs; there is more than ample space within its walls for ten times the inhabitants or habitations it now contains; so shrunk is the city within the cincture that once with difficulty compressed it within its circuit. The desert campagna itself, sweeping up in many places close under its walls, a few half cultivated gardens and vineyards, with here and there a noble but half ruined villa, of some Roman prince; or a few road-side inns, or osteria, more wretched than the meanest beer-shop in England, form the only suburbs of Rome. On this side some straggling inferior buildings succeed the churches and fountain I have mentioned, when, after passing the handsome modern entrance to the Villa Borghesi, we came to a stand at the Porta del Popolo, whence the *doganieri*,* the plague of all continental cities, issued forth to search the carriage, and snap asunder the chain of associations that every imagination must be weaving at such a moment. They were, however, soon reduced to quiescence by a trifling fee, and the carriage passed beneath the gate and entered.

But I could not enter Rome so unceremoniously; I had got out upon the arrival of the *doganieri*, and remained looking upon the gate and the reticulated brickwork of the walls of Aurelian, which are still entire at this point. The gate, however, is not the Flaminian gate, which was more to the right, but one built under Pius IV. in 1561, from the designs of Michael Angelo. Here I stood for a few moments rivetted to the spot, feeling myself a barbarian arrived

* Custom-house officers.

before the gates of Rome—a Goth—one of the race of the spoilers, standing over the mutilated remains of their work of destruction.

This Porta del Popolo is the most northern, and now the principal entrance to Rome, the road that issues from it leading to the north. In her early days, the principal roads from Rome pointed to the south.

The Appian way, which was the first great road constructed, led to the south; for then the centres of civilization lay in Greece and Asia Minor. But the poles of civilization have been reversed, and now the great focus is in the north, and the principal gate of Rome points in that direction; whence arrive daily from the land of the Dacian, the Gaul, the Briton, and the Goth, hordes nearly as numerous as those who poured down to ravage and destroy, but who now come to gaze upon and admire the twice-fallen mistress of the world. Twice fallen; for her second empire of the crossier, from which she is also fallen, was perhaps, more complete than her first empire of the sword—the mental dominion of the Popes more enthralling than the material sway of the Cæsars.

As I walked slowly from the gate, beneath the walls that enclose the Pincian hill, indulging in such reflections as the foregoing, I formed the project of making the complete circuit of the walls, previous to entering the city; which, with Nibby's map in my hand, I with some exertion carried into effect, before the short twilight of the south closed in upon me.

Proceeding in an easterly direction from the Porta del Popolo, along the road that follows the line of the walls, the first striking object is the *muro torto*, overhanging that part of the road adjoining the gate, and is the first piece of the opus reticulatum that the traveller discovers. It is a mass now forming that portion of the wall which encloses the Pincian hill, and is composed of rubble work faced with reticulated tufo, and considerably overhangs its base. Antiquarians suppose it not to have been originally built as a wall, but are undecided as to its probable original purpose. All we know is, that it was most likely some public building altered to form a portion of the walls constructed by Aurelian; of which it forms a part of the circuit. The next portion of the walls is composed of square towers and intermediate curtains, and is of much more modern date; but here still, the foundations are ancient, with blocks of marble and other indications of edifices and monuments built into them, either at the Aurelian period, or at the later and more hurried repairs of Belisarius or Narses, when columns of precious marble and statues of the finest workmanship were broken up as building materials in the exigencies of the moment.

Following the road, which now turns round in a somewhat south-easterly direc-

tion, the *Porta Pinciana* presents itself—it is now built up and disused : next comes the *Porta Salaria*, the *tendo-Achillis* of Rome, the point at which she was first vulnerable to the barbarian. Here it was that on the 24th of August, A.D. 409, Alaric, aided by the treachery of the guards, entered the city, and Rome fell. The next gate, at nearly the most eastern point of Rome, is a modern one, the *Porta Pia*, opened by Pius the Fourth in 1561. Its design, though the invention of Michael Angelo, is not good, particularly in the details, where the *Pateras*, with linen suspended over them, so often imitated in the meagre architectural details of the works of the last century, are said to represent a barber's basin and towel ; thus satirically introduced by the architect, in allusion to the humble origin of the Pontiff, with whose patronage he had some reason to be discontented. Soon after passing the *Porta Pia* we arrive at the *Prætorian camp*, the quarters of the city cohorts, the 20,000 chosen soldiers who watched over the safety of Rome and the Emperors. These buildings were also, among many others, made to form part of the fortifications of Aurelian, that “ great but melancholy work,” as Gibbon terms it ; for the fortification of the Capital betrayed the decline of the Monarchy. The walls are very picturesque as we proceed, and the view over the country to the left rather fine, enriched by the magnificent villas of the Albani and Patrizi. The next gate is the one leading to Tivoli, the ancient Tiburtina, now called *Porta San Lorenzo* ; it is composed of massive masonry, probably forming part of some building anterior to the fortifications of Aurelian. It is, however, considered the work of that Emperor ; the inscriptions, still perfect, announce that it was repaired by Arcadius and Honorius.

As I passed each gate my curiosity to enter the city increased, although as I afterwards discovered all the gates on the eastern and great part of the southern sides only lead to the desert portions of Rome, to ground lying waste or covered with half cultivated vineyards, or the straggling gardens of deserted villas ; I, however, checked my curiosity at the time, and proceeded.

The same style of brick walls, in great part the work of Aurelian, with massy square towers, continue as far as the *Porta Maggiore*, the road to Palestrina (the ancient *Præneste*). This gate formed part of an aqueduct built into the walls ; the *Anio novus* and the *Claudian waters* passed along it here, but as those courses fell into decay, the *Acqua Felice* was in the middle ages turned in, and still flows over it into the city. What renders all such facts so interesting at Rome is, that, unlike the ruins of many other places, less is left to mere conjecture ; the history and changes of many of the great works now remaining entire, or in part, being attested by inscriptions, in many instances still quite perfect. At this spot are

several in good preservation, particularizing works executed by C. Claudius and Vespasian.

Near this gate three other water-courses enter the city. Proceeding in my circuit, I found the wall entirely composed of an aqueduct, whose well constructed arches are easily discernible from the more clumsy work of a later date with which they are filled up: farther on are the remains of an Amphitheatre, consisting of Corinthian columns with intermediate arches, all of brick, the whole of which is filled up with inferior work, and forms part of the wall. Between the gate of San Lorenzo and this point, are many masses of ruins studding the open country, which I had not time to approach.

The next gate is the Porta San Giovanni, the southern gate of Rome, the road to Naples. Here the scene becomes very imposing. Looking through the gate into the city, appears the magnificent church of San Giovanni, with its vast esplanade, and the attendant buildings of the Scala Santa, the Baptistry of Constantine, and others. Whilst looking over the campagna, which stretches from this portion of the walls far to the south and east in waste magnificence, studded as far as the eye can reach with groups of noble ruins, and striped with the dark lines of crumbling aqueducts, growing fainter and fainter till they are lost in the bold projections of the hills of Tivoli and Palestrina, the view presents a combination of beauty and ruin which seems the sublime of desolation. From hence to the Porta Latina, now closed, the walls are mostly modern, of various dates, supported by clumsy buttresses, and decorated in some places by the arms of different Popes on a gigantic scale. From the shield of one of these the tiara has fallen, and lies by the way-side, a mass of nearly a ton weight. Passing the gate, near which is a pretty ruin of a small Doric temple in brick, I soon arrived at the Porta Sebastiano, formerly the Porta Capena, where commenced the famous Appian way; the first great road of Europe! the "*regina viarum*"—the first great effort of the Romans in that branch of engineering which was one of the great means of the extension and maintenance of their empire, and which, descending by inheritance to the modern nations, their successors, has incalculably accelerated the spread of knowledge, and led eventually to the still more wonderful railroad; by the rapid communications of which, civilization will make greater advances during the next single century than it would in five with the best common roads ever constructed. The road does not now come direct to the gate, which is approached by a modern one, but lies at a short distance, its line scarcely distinguishable, and only marked by the crumbling tombs that once formed its magnificent border. This was not however the only road lined with

tombs ; it was always customary to place the monuments of the dead by the side of the great public ways, but this, the principal and most frequented, was occupied by the more splendid and costly monuments, and so became more celebrated than the others. The inferior lines of approach to the city were occupied principally by the tombs of undistinguished persons—the common church-yards as it were, whilst this was the high place of monuments, the Westminster Abbey of the Romans. Here, and in similar situations, the Roman commencement of an epitaph, “*Stay traveller*”—the “*Siste viator*”—is alone appropriate ; yet modern classicists, in the servile imitation of every thing Greek or Roman, have often adopted it in situations where no traveller was ever likely to pass ; even in solitary churchyards not even traversed by a footpath. Such an imitation is nearly as ridiculous as the story Miss Martineau tells of the disposition of the black population of America to imitate the white. In a burying ground belonging to the people of colour, near New York I think, she mentions a tomb-stone in commemoration of a negro infant, which in emulation of the phraseology of the polite whites, commences

“ Sweet blighted lily,” &c. &c.

From the Porta San Sebastiano to the Porta San Paolo, are many marks of hasty reparation of the walls, in urgent and troublous times ; tombs, rare marbles, and entire buildings, being indiscriminately built into them. Here are works of every date, from that of Aurelian in the third, to those of the Popes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Beyond the Porta San Paolo there is no road under the walls ; they continue, however, from the gate to the river, a distance of about a quarter of a mile, but present nothing to interest except the pyramid of Caius Cestius built into the wall, which is nearly as perfect as in the year in 330 days of which it was built, according to the testament of Cestius, as narrated in the inscription.

After examining the pyramid I did not pursue the line of wall to the river, but entered the gate, yet not the city ; for within this gate the road continues between the vineyards, partially enclosed in high whitened walls, and is only varied by a few half deserted buildings, till it approaches the river near the bocca della verita, where, without penetrating farther, I crossed the Tiber in the ferry boat, to the point where the walls enclosing the western portion of the city, the borgo di Trastevere, come down to the water. The wall of Aurelian was full half a mile in advance of this, commencing nearly opposite to the south eastern point, where

those from the gate of San Paolo to the river terminate. But notwithstanding this, the inclosure of Aurelian, on the western side of the river, was not larger than the modern one; for to the north it swept down to the river much sooner than the modern wall, leaving part of the Monte Gianicolo and all the Vatican district uninclosed; so that the river formed the only defence of a great portion of the western side of the city.

There is no road round the walls on the western side of the Tiber, but after a hurried glance up the river towards Ripa grande, which is the port of Rome, where some half-dozen small vessels were lying along the deserted quay, I recommenced my circuit with good courage; and passing the Porta Portese, which is the principal entrance to the wharf and custom-houses, I began to climb the steep rugged ground which begins immediately to rise towards the summit of the Monte Gianicolo. Turning to look back, I saw the Tiber rolling beneath me; and the silent quay, and custom-house constructed by Innocent the Eighth in 1692, above which I stood, seemed nearly as desolate as the ancient "Fanporium" on the opposite side. That spot, for several centuries continually crowded with the riches of the world, displays no remnant of its former importance but a few large blocks of marble; perhaps some of the last ever brought to the city for architectural purposes, and which in the turmoil of approaching troubles found no purchasers, and have lain unheeded through the long ages which have elapsed since they were landed there.

Pursuing my route beneath the walls over very rugged and difficult ground for walking or even climbing, I eventually passed the Porta San Pancrazio, without having met with any thing worthy of record in this modern portion of the walls. I however proceeded, and soon arrived at the Porta Cavaleggieri, on the brow of the Janiculan hill; from which, had I been at the top instead of underneath the walls, I should have obtained a magnificent view of the city. Beyond the Porta Cavaleggieri, the entrance to the Vatican district from the Civita Vecchia road, I determined to make an attempt to get a view by climbing some steep banks at a short distance, which appeared to me higher than the walls: this I effected, and on turning round, as I gained with some difficulty my elevated position, I was much struck by the picture that unexpectedly presented itself. There, immediately beneath the walls which had concealed it, lay a mass of architecture of grandiose magnificence, piled together in the most elaborate manner, and crowned with a vast dome, that could only be the Cupola of St. Peter's. I had actually obtained, thus unexpectedly, a bird's-eye view of the great Cathedral: the effect, however, upon examination, did not sustain the first impression; but as this

close panoramic view is one never intended by its architects, I will not criticise in such a position, but proceed to the completion of my circuit. Passing this point, we descend again towards the river, and only one more gate occurs before the walls terminate at the water's edge with the fortifications of the Castle of St. Angelo, the Mausoleum of Hadrian metamorphosed into the present fortress-tomb, which with the bridge of St. Angelo ornamented with the shewy statues of Bernini, forms a good group of objects; particularly as seen from the east bank with St. Peter's in the distance; a view often engraved, and which pleased me, when I afterwards saw it, like the face of an old acquaintance—so familiar had I become with it in the numerous prints I had seen from the pencils of innumerable artists. I found it impossible to reach the bank of the river close to the Castle, but a little further on I got down to what appeared to be a towing path, and from this position the backs of the houses forming the Via di Ripetta have a most picturesque but somewhat ruinous effect. They have been taken down at one point to form the Ripetta, a sort of lesser port, for the use of barges that bring wine and wood down the Tiber, from the campagna and the Appenines. This landing-place, for it is on much too small a scale to merit the name of a port, forms a picturesque object from the west bank, descending as it does in semicircular terraces connected by handsome flights of steps, from the level of the street to that of the river, which is some thirty feet lower. The space too occasioned by the removal of the houses, opens to view a handsome church on the east side of the Via di Ripetta, which, with the group of barges generally there, and the fountain at the top of the steps, would altogether form a good picture, and one which I have not yet seen executed. The backs of houses of a still more dilapidated character now occupy again the east bank, till within a short distance of the point where the walls of Aurelian, inclosing the eastern portion of the city, come down to their north-eastern extremity. The river here is about fifty yards broad, and I crossed in a boat which I hailed from the Ripetta; and making my way, with permission obtained through the influence of a couple of Paoli, through some inclosed ground, and likewise through a wretched house, I found myself again under the Aurelian walls, close to my starting-place, the Porta del Popolo, having performed the circuit of the enclosure, which is about eight miles.

I had now, I thought, taken a sufficiently accurate review of the exterior of the city, to warrant my entrance without further ceremony; and thoroughly tired by my somewhat laborious excursion, I passed beneath the dark arch of the gate, and stood upon the Piazza del Popolo.

This superb Piazza was reduced to its present form under the French domination,

and now certainly forms a splendid entrance to a great city. It is a large open space, of a nearly circular figure, in the centre of which rises an obelisk of red granite, upwards of seventy feet high, originally in one piece, one of those wonders of Egypt brought to Rome by the Emperors. It first decorated the Circus Maximus, whence it was removed from among the ruins where it lay broken, by order of Sixtus V., under the direction of the architect Dom. Fontana, who erected it here in 1589—and likewise the larger entire one, in front of St. Peter's in 1586—with half the fuss that has recently been made in Paris about raising the obelisk of Luxor, with all the advantages of modern machinery.

To return to the obelisk of the Piazza del Popolo: it is placed upon the original pedestal which bore it in the Circus Maximus, when placed there by Augustus, after the victory of Actium, of which it was one of the trophies; and the original inscription is still quite perfect.* This simple pedestal has been recently surrounded by marble steps, with four Egyptian lions at the angles, spouting water into immense tazze of red granite, the design of Valadier, commenced under the French, and which, though not good in execution, have a sumptuous and fine effect; and altogether, the group forms as grand an object for the centre of a great public Piazza as can be conceived. •

On the right, in the centre of a semicircular screen or wall, which incloses that side of the Piazza, is a rich fountain decorated with a colossal statue of Neptune and other figures, and on the left is a similar fountain, with a figure of Rome of the same dimensions; beneath which are sculptured, with good effect, the well-known Roman emblem of the wolf suckling the twin brothers, the sight of which, in such a situation, carries the imagination vividly back to the period of the ancient fable; and in spite of the modern buildings and sculpture, which, perhaps, have a tendency to destroy the illusion, you feel that you are in Rome. Above the fountain on the left, rise the sloping terraces leading to the Promenade of Monte Pincio, rich in statuary and architectural embellishments, also planned and commenced by the French, who found this now noble Piazza encumbered with the meanest and most dirty houses in Rome, and the Pincian hill, now one of the most beautiful promenades of Europe, the half deserted vineyard of the lazy Monks of Santa Maria del Popolo. Such are the objects which meet the eye to the right and left of the Piazza del Popolo; whilst, opposite to the entrance gate, open three of the principal streets of Rome, the centre one being the Corso, that

* Imp. Cæsar divi Augustus Pontifex XII. Cos. XI. Trib. Pot. XXI. Aegypto in potestatem Populi: Romani redacta soli donum dedit.

avenue of palaces which here terminates with two handsome* churches of corresponding though not exactly similar architecture; one on each side the entrance. These churches, though small, are well proportioned to their situation, and each surmounted by a well-designed cupola. The street to the right of the Corso is the Via di Ripetta, whose terminus on one side is formed by one of the churches just described, and on the other by a square modern building, of plain, but imposing design, which in Roman phraseology is termed a palace. The street to the left of the Corso is the Via Babuino, which is the English quarter, and the entrance is formed, like that of the Via di Ripetta, by one of the churches which terminate the Corso, on one side, and a similar Palazzo on the other; the Palazzo being the grand Hotel des Iles Britanniques, one of the best Hotels in Rome—indeed, with the neighbouring Hotel de Paris, the only establishment of that description in Rome where an English family will meet with suitable accommodation.

I have been thus particular in my description of the Piazza del Popolo, as it is the only portion of modern Rome, with the Corso, the Via Babuino, and the Piazza di Spagna, that leaves any impression upon the traveller, except under the influence of great public buildings or interesting remains of antiquity.

I now entered my hotel, the Iles Britanniques, with the intention of making a good dinner, and retiring early to rest, after a day of great fatigue and excitement. But I soon found that a stranger of excitable temperament, arrived at last at the spot which has been during a long, and, perhaps, toilsome journey, the vanishing point of his mental perspective—the point at which all the rays of his expectation have been long concentrated, is not in a situation to sit quietly down in a Salon à la Française while his dinner is preparing. After a hasty ablution, I therefore hurried forth again, and mounting the terraces of the Pincian hill, the Mount of Gardens of the ancients, I was amply repaid for my perseverance. In the fast-thickening twilight the greater part of modern Rome lay spread beneath me like a map, but without its indistinctness; for even in the shades of evening all outlines are sharp and distinct in this limpid atmosphere, however much the scale may be reduced by distance. Over the broad Piazza, and beyond the Tiber, which is however not visible, rose the enormous dome of St. Peter's, magnified in the yet glowing irradiations which the set sun had left in the west for its background; making, with the vast and towering palace of the Vatican, which almost overtops it, a truly splendid group. More to the south lay the mass of the modern city, with the cupolas and towers of its three hundred churches, some of the most lofty of whose gilded orbs and crosses, still catching

a ray of sunlight, glittered with a sparkling and beautiful effect against the deep blue sky.

In the midst of the mass of building may be traced the splendid though irregular line of the palaces of the Corso, dividing the city into two nearly equal parts. About midway of this line rises, towering magnificently above the buildings, the column of Aurelius ; and far beyond, to the south-east, the still more perfect and beautiful one of Trajan. Both these wonders of ancient art are still perfectly entire, with the exception of the original crowning statues of the emperors, which have been replaced by those of St. Peter and St. Paul, their successors in the domination of the world, from the seat of Roman power. The pedestals and monuments of the emperors have been usurped by the saints, and even the Pantheon, whose low massive cupola may be from hence distinguished, (rising beyond the crowded buildings of the Campus Martius, now the most thickly built portion of Rome,) though still entire, is subservient to far other than its original purposes. The niches of Jupiter Ultore, and the twelve Olympian divinities, are filled by the Virgin Mary and the twelve apostles. The very shrine of Jupiter, the avenger, in whose name rivers of Christian blood once flowed, is now dedicated to all the martyrs, and masses are sung for their souls on the very spot whence the sanguinary oracle was uttered, which condemned them to a cruel and ignominious, but since made glorious death. The sufferings and fortitude of those martyred victims contributed mainly to establish the faith which they were murdered to extinguish ; and such must have been the feeling that supported them in their anguish ; and of which feeling Tertullian prophetically and truly said :—

“ Sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum.”

The palace of the Christian Popes looks proudly down upon the city of the Pagan Cæsars, and the triumphant symbol, the cross, surmounts every remnant of a temple, that time and the devastations of man have left still capable of being converted into a place of Christian worship. By an apparently just retribution, all that remained of the once Pagan, persecuting Rome, became the very heart and centre of Christianity—the great city of the Church—and would have been so still, had a timely reform corrected the abuses which the lapse of ages and too much irresponsible power introduced.

Persecuted Christianity was eventually the preservation of Rome ; indeed, had it not become “ the rock ” upon which the poor and despised Peter planted the banner

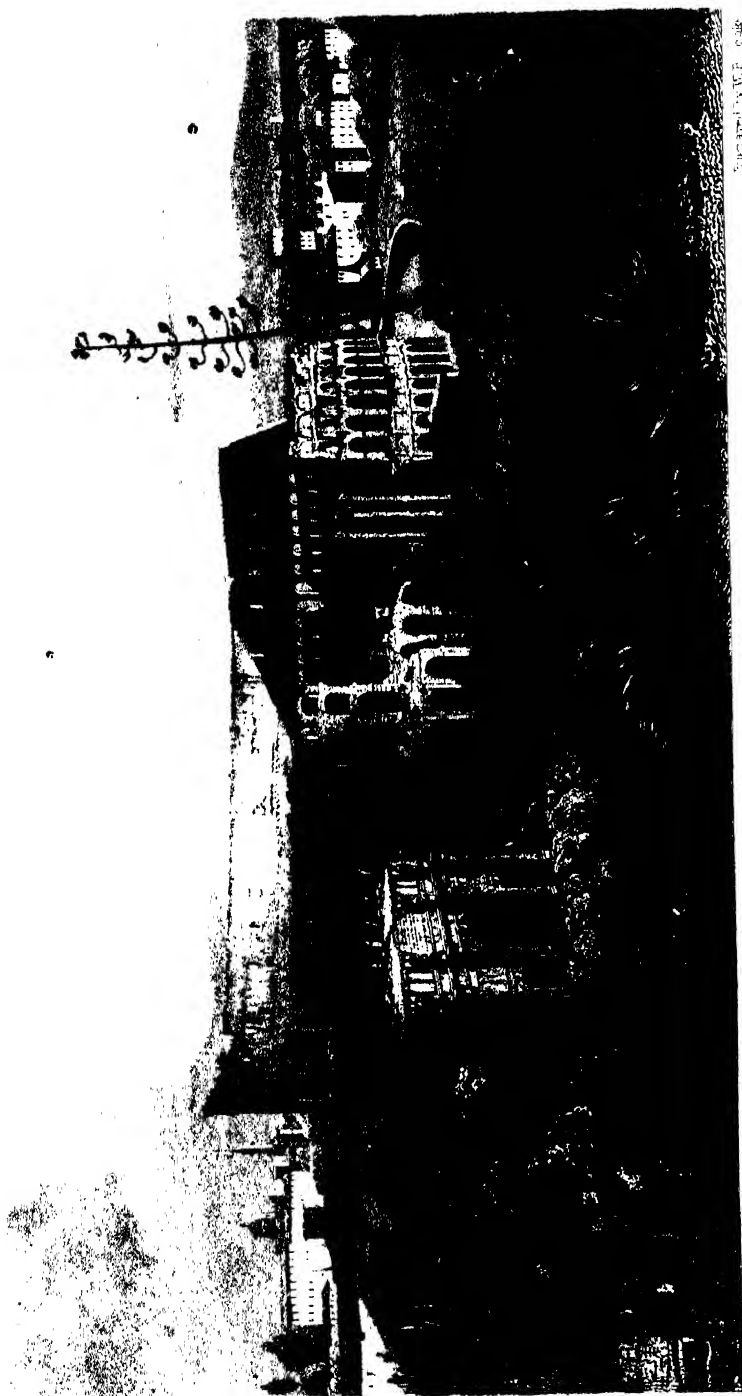
of the gospel, and erected his church, it would now have been a shapeless mass of ruins, visited only by the antiquarian or curious, like Paestum or Cuma; its very existence would have been doubted, or perhaps disbelieved altogether by such sceptics as amused themselves in the last century with conjecturing that the twelve Cæsars might be merely allegorical symbols—perhaps the twelve signs of the Zodiac. Nearly all that exists of the relics of ancient or the splendour of modern Rome, is the preservation or creation of the Church, which, though it has been directly or indirectly the cause of the destruction of much that every lover of the fine arts must deplore, yet, it must be acknowledged that without it, Rome would have been no more.

Advancing along the Pincio, in a southerly direction, towards the Villa Medici, the view becomes more extensive, and still farther on, after quitting the gardens by the south gate, and continuing along the street, or rather road, that along the ridge of the Pincian hill passes the church of La Trinità di Monte, in front of which I remained some minutes: it is most imposing. From thence, looking down the spacious and picturesque flight of steps that descends to the Piazza di Spagna, (a handsome, though irregular square, connected with the Piazza del Popolo by a fine street called the Via Babuino, which I have mentioned,) one may carry the eye along the Via Condotti, which opens on the opposite side of the square, nearly to the Bridge and Castle of St. Angelo, almost to the door of St. Peter's, and over nearly the entire mass of buildings composing the modern city.

I returned slowly towards the promenade of the Pincio, obtaining every now and then a most beautiful *colpo d'occhio*, as the Italians have it—particularly one from the front of the Villa Medici, where a fountain and a verdant arch, formed by two lime trees, make an enchanting foreground;—one that has induced almost every artist who has visited Rome to take a sketch from the spot; many of which I had previously seen; and the sight of a living realization of a well-known picture never fails to produce an agreeable sensation.

At this hour, in the dim light and still repose of evening, so favourable to reflection, these views from the Pincian hill are, indeed, absorbing objects of contemplation, and until darkness had thrown her mantle over the scene, and snatched it from my greedy sight, I remained wandering to and fro in a very pleasing state of semi-abstraction. Even then, I descended the sloping terraces slowly and reluctantly to the Piazza del Popolo; quitting the all-engrossing spell as I did for the dull common-places of a fashionable inn. The Pincio became my favourite lounge during my winter's residence in Rome, and after any

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 | |



short absence during excursions in the neighbouring hills or villages, it was always the first spot I revisited on my return. It was long before I could sufficiently subdue the current of images and thoughts that the scenery of that day and their associations had sent rushing through my mind, to enable me to compose myself to sleep.

I thought of all I had read in my youth, upon the absorbing subject of Italy ; of the lasting impression, that her sunny skies, her history, her fall, the glorious wrecks of her greatness, mouldering in their picturesque beauty, her subsequent revival of art and learning, and her struggles for liberty, had left upon the minds of all who have visited her, from the early pilgrims of the dark periods of the fifth and sixth centuries, to the youthful wanderings of Milton, and from that time even to the visits of the fashionable tourists of our day. The aspect of Rome never failed to awe, even after her power had fallen ; when martial myriads “no longer mustered in her gates,” and her name conveyed no terror to the approaching barbarian. Like a stupendous wreck upon the waters, dismasted, disabled, and deserted by her crew, around which the savage in his canoe, issuing from the reedy creek of his wild island, paddles wondering and overawed as he floats beneath her towering hull, the work of arts beyond his comprehension, lay conquered Rome, at the feet of the savage hordes who had subdued her.

Similar impressions were produced upon the minds of the early pilgrims from the savage north, when the stupendous fabrics of Rome appeared before them—they seemed above the power of man to create or destroy, as they stood, still perfect in all their great features, towering over the ruins of lesser works. Above all others, the Coliseum aroused such feelings, seeming in its ponderous circle to stamp the city with the signet of eternity ; and under the influence of its stupendous magnificence, superstitious awe dictated the prophetic proverb recorded by the Venerable Bede, in the eighth century—“While the Coliseum stands, Rome shall stand ; when the Coliseum falls, Rome will fall ; when Rome falls, the world will fall* ;” and this proverb, quoted by Gibbon in his “Decline and Fall,” is still remembered, and repeated by the populace of Rome. Even after the barbarian had defiled her sacred places, and dispersed her treasures, a spell remained about the name of Rome ; the influence of which has been felt and acknowledged by all capable of expressing the feeling, from the early pilgrims to the days of Petrarch, and even through the withering philosophy and scepticism of the eighteenth century to the days of Byron.

* *Quandiu stabit Colyseus, stabit et Roma ; quando cadet Colyseus cadet Roma ; quando cadet Roma cadet et mundus.*

In Petrarch's time, the beauties of ancient art began to be properly appreciated by a few great and cultivated minds, but when he first beheld those monuments, he was astonished at the indifference of the Romans themselves to the wonders of art that they still possessed, and to use the language of Gibbon, "he was rather humbled than elated, by the discovery that except his friend Rienzi, and one of the Colonna, a stranger of the Rhone was more conversant with these antiquities than the nobles and natives of the metropolis."

Had our own Shakspeare visited Rome, what veins of unexplored ore would he not have laid open with his powerful mind and original genius! Italy indeed did furnish him with the subjects of some of his sublimest creations, as it had done to Chaucer before him; but influenced by the scenes themselves, and by the associations of the spots where those dramas were acted in their warm reality, how still more vivid would have been his powerful pictures! Voltaire declared that "Julius Cæsar," with all that appeared to him unpardonable faults, in neglect of "the unities" and anachronisms of costume,* was the most living picture of that eventful period of Roman history that modern pen has produced. If such is the case, even on the admission of the snarling and satirical Voltaire, when the author wrote entirely from imagination, what might the picture have been, executed among the ruins of the Forum, or while contemplating the colossal statue of Pompey, unchanged since the falling body of the murdered Cæsar stained its feet with "the best blood of Rome?" Milton ever retained the impression of his commune with the great, both living and dead, during his visit to Italy; and her beautiful scenes formed the beau idéal from which he composed his glowing descriptions of Paradise;—his most luxuriant shades are "Valombrosian shades," and his most glowing landscapes vaulted with "Italian skies." Even in his great poem, too, he finds adroitly an opportunity to pay a tribute to his Italian friend Galileo. What communings must have passed between two such minds!—remembered, no doubt, with deep emotion by the blind bard, when he penned the lines, comparing the vast shield of Satan to the moon—

Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesolè,
Or in Val-d'Arno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe."

The impressions received in the country of Dante, in conjunction with the

* Shakspeare makes a conspirator say, "Gentlemen, put on your *hats*."

drama of Grotius, no doubt, suggested the plan of the immortal poem itself. Italy, so long the vortex that swallowed up the learning, the science, and the arts of the civilized world, could not be exhausted by the devastations of barbarians, and has remained, as it were, a store-house of intellect, from which modern nations have been furnished with their poetry, their philosophy, and all the arts of civilization; a mine, to which modern *littérateurs* rushed, like thirsty travellers to a fountain, taking from it the richest ore for centuries, whilst it is not yet half exhausted, or even explored.

Addison saw Rome, and wrote his *Cato*. Evelyn was excited even to eloquence by its aspect. It would, however, form too long a catalogue to enumerate all that even our own school of literature and art owes to Italian inspiration, without adverting to the great names of other countries. But even among our contemporaries, how much do we owe to the scenery and eventful story of Italy, for some of the most beautiful inspirations of which our literature can boast! Bulwer visited the house of Cola di Rienzi, and wrote one of the most vivid and original of his romances. The magnificent ruins of the baths of Caracalla produced, from the pen of Shelley, the wonderful *Prometheus*; and the monuments of the Seven Hills drew from the pen of the wandering Harold those sublime reflections which may have occurred to many gifted minds, but at last found in his the power of stamping them into language, which will outlive the monuments themselves, giving them a longer—a second immortality.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS—SKETCHES OF HISTORY, &c. &c.

THE next morning I was early in the streets of Rome, and the morning air, though late in October, was balmy and soft as that of an English evening in August; at Rome, we are already approaching the southern portion of the Italian Peninsula, and the climate is perceptibly milder than at Florence, for although figures give but a degree or two in its favour, a greater difference is apparent to all who have resided in both cities. I was struck with the appearance of orange-trees, growing luxuriantly in the back courts of the houses, and bearing fine and apparently ripe fruit, in situations where they could receive but little sun; where, in short, in our climate, it would be an exercise of charity to put a dwindling geranium out of its miserable existence. It is true, the orange ripens freely as far north as Genoa, but that part of the coast is singularly sheltered from the north and east winds by the Alps; which leave it open to the south and south-west only, so that it cannot be taken as a fair criterion of the climate of the north of Italy; nor, indeed, can any of the country lying immediately at the southern feet of the Alps, for as one advances from that sheltered situation farther south, towards Florence, he finds the general temperature lower, and the winters much colder. Rome stands unsheltered in the midst of the wide campagna, and yet the mildness of its climate is at once attested by many visible evidences, among others by the open shops—few of which have any glazed windows, that is to say, such as grocers, bakers, cheese-dealers, wine shops, and a variety of others to which we have no corresponding establishments. In the Corso, however, where shops occupy the lower story of most of the Palaces, many of them have been recently fitted up much after the fashion of Paris or London; for the tourist is unconsciously obliterating at every move the sources of his own enjoyment: the great influx of travellers who yearly overrun the classic soil of Italy is fast wiping away every trace of nationality, in customs,

architecture, costume, and—shop fronts ; but in this latter case, perhaps, a change of climate may also have assisted in accelerating the change. I cannot help thinking that the temperature must formerly have been much milder in winter than even now ; for though we have few frosty days in a modern winter in Rome, there are many when an enclosed shop must be a great comfort to the inhabitant, and when even a fire would appear to me almost necessary ; and yet few even of the Palaces are provided with fire-places in the living-rooms. The evidences, however, of any change of climate, are rather contradictory ; for Virgil and Horace both mention, incidentally, cheerful fires blazing on the hearths of the peasantry as one of their greatest luxuries. Horace, for instance, represents a wife heaping up a good fire to welcome home her husband,—

“ Sacrum et vetustis extruat lignis focum,
Lassi sub adventum viri ;”

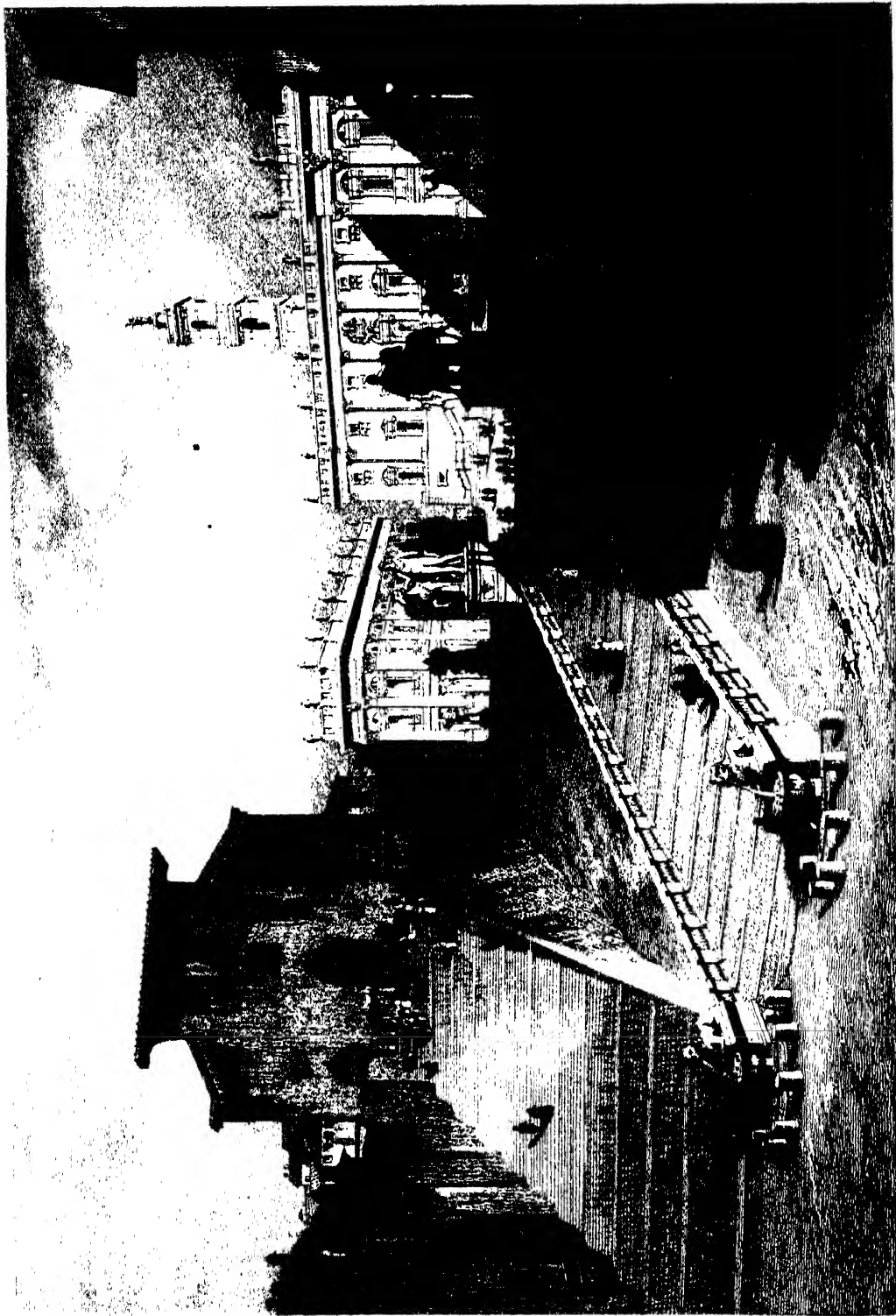
and many such passages might be quoted ; but if from such evidence it be decided, that the winters of middle Italy were always as cold as now, then all who have passed a winter here must feel that the architects of the Roman houses have made a great omission in not constructing fire-places. It is said that when the Czar Paul visited Italy, in the winter, he went shivering about, exclaiming, “ In Russia one sees the cold, but in Italy one feels it.”

In this first day's wandering in Rome, I sought out situations that appeared likely to afford me such extensive and general views as would enable me to form a correct idea of the plan and relative distribution of the ancient and modern cities ; and from the great inequalities of ground in every direction, (except the plain of the Campus Martius, occupied by the greater part of the modern city,) it may be supposed that many fine and almost general views may be obtained. From the different bridges of the Tiber, several fine pictures are presented. From the lodges of the Vatican, there are some charming peeps. A fine expanse of the city and the campagna, and hills beyond, is stretched before you, from the gardens of the convent of San Pietro, in Mont'orio, once the gardens of Nero, and the spot handed down by tradition as the scene of the crucifixion of St. Peter. But the best general view of the modern city is, I think, from the Monte Vaticano, on the high ground behind St. Peter's. At your feet rises St. Peter's, the mighty Basilica Vaticana, on a scale too gigantic for the eye to embrace. Below, lie the palace and gardens of the Corsini, once the abode of Christina of Sweden, amid whose marble terraces and groves of

Ilices, her sunny walks must have been oft clouded by the imagined shade of the unfortunate Monaldeschi, and his dying moan in the galleries of Fontainebleau have mingled in her ears with the music of the birds and the fountains of these delicious gardens. Beyond, stretches the Borgo di Trastevere, celebrated for the beauty of its women, who are still said to possess the outline of feature of the ancient Romans. The people of Trastevere have doubtless mixed less with foreign blood, and are a race distinct from the rest of the modern Romans, and of a bolder character, as well as more muscular form. They wear, too, a different and somewhat picturesque costume; and I have often been reminded of the noble head of the Agripina, in the Capitoline Museum, by the peculiar expression common to most of the women of Trastevere, whose dark eyes flash beneath the shade of the graceful Fazzoletto, with a glance little less commanding than that of the imperial statue.

Then comes the yellow Tiber, still the "flavum Tiber," though some will have it green, traversed here by a modern, there by an ancient bridge. Beyond, crowds the mass of building of modern Rome, with its churches and palaces, whose sunny walls and domes cut out their individual forms sharply and accurately against the clear blue sky, as I have said before, losing none of their distinctness, even of the detail, by distance. It seems a picture reduced by a concave lens; or one of the wonderful productions of the Daguerreotype—an accurate and vivid lucigraph. The south-east course of the river opens a vista towards the campagna and the Appennines, upon whose flanks may be distinctly seen the villas and town of Frascati, the villages of Monte-Compatri, Rocca del Papa, and others, and even the more distant Tivoli; with the terraces of the Villa d'Este beneath, which, at the distance of eighteen miles, may be distinctly traced. The outline engraving, which accompanies this work, is copied from a very large and accurate print, drawn and engraved by Vasi, and published in Rome, referring to which the tourist upon his return may pass delightful moments of contemplation over again; and even in foggy London fancy himself breathing the limpid atmosphere of the Janiculan hill—the highest ground of Rome, of which the Monte Vaticano forms a part.

But the most celebrated view in Rome is from the tower of the Campidoglio. This is the most classical of panoramas, at all events the most interesting; for the only one which can pretend to rivalry with it in classic association, is that from the Acropolis of Athens, where, however, the associations are too misty and fabulous to enter into competition with the more recent and real events of Roman story, from her greatness, to her singular fall which links her history to



that of modern nations. But the view from the tower of the Campidoglio is not dependent upon associations only for its attractions; in abstract beauty it is rich almost beyond rivalry, and would be delightful to gaze upon were it not the scene of events for ever consecrated by the pages of genius. Here it was, to this spot, that De Stael makes her eloquent cicérone Corinna lead her English lover, to pour forth to him, in language worthy of the subject, the sublime reflections to which the contemplations of the ruins of Rome give rise in every sensitive and elegant mind. De Stael's "Corinna" was the first novel I ever read, and it has left a living impression upon my mind: its characters appear real beings—friends and companions of my early youth, with whom I have oft conversed, and whose voices seem to have been ever musical and soft;—its events seem like those of early childhood, that leave such vivid pictures in the gallery of the imagination, which time never dulls, and which in brightness of colouring the after events of life never equal. These recollections of my first novel are as brightly pictured as the memory of

. "the schoolboy spot
We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot."

My first walks in Rome realized many of the scenes treasured up in memory since my boyish reading of Corinna. I saw them at last reduced to real forms, and though they lost something, perhaps, of the poetry and colouring, by the transmutation, were yet delightful to look upon as a realization of a happy dream. I saw the fountain of Trevi, with its crowd of statues, and its dashing cascades settling into a glassy mirror in its front; and, gazing abstractedly upon it, the excited fancy supplied the figure of Oswald leaning over the balustrade, and Corinna recognizing the features of the proud stranger, as she saw them reflected in the clear waters. And now, as I mounted the magnificent steps of the Capitol, fancy drew the figure of the melancholy Englishman, leaning against the colossal lion of basalt, as the pageant descended, bearing Corinna, all radiant with the excitement of her triumph, and crowned with the bays that had been refused to Tasso: this story has for me become one of the associations of the spot. But I must descend from the fanciful, and attempt to describe the realities of the place. The pedestals terminating the staircase on either side at the top are each surmounted by a colossal figure of a youth holding a horse, of inferior workmanship, removed here from the ruins of the baths of Constantine. The balustrade to the right and left is ornamented by other pieces of ancient

sculpture, arranged by Michael Angelo ; and the centre of the esplanade in front of the building is decorated by the noble statue of bronze of Marcus Aurelius, the only ancient equestrian statue preserved, with the exception of those of the Balbi, discovered at Herculaneum, and now in the Museum at Naples, which are of very inferior style. The building on the left contains the Capitoline collection of ancient sculpture ; and behind it rises the church and convent of Santa Maria in Ara-Cœli, built on the site of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. To the right is the residence of the Senator* of Rome ; the centre (from which rises the tower) is occupied by police offices, &c. &c.

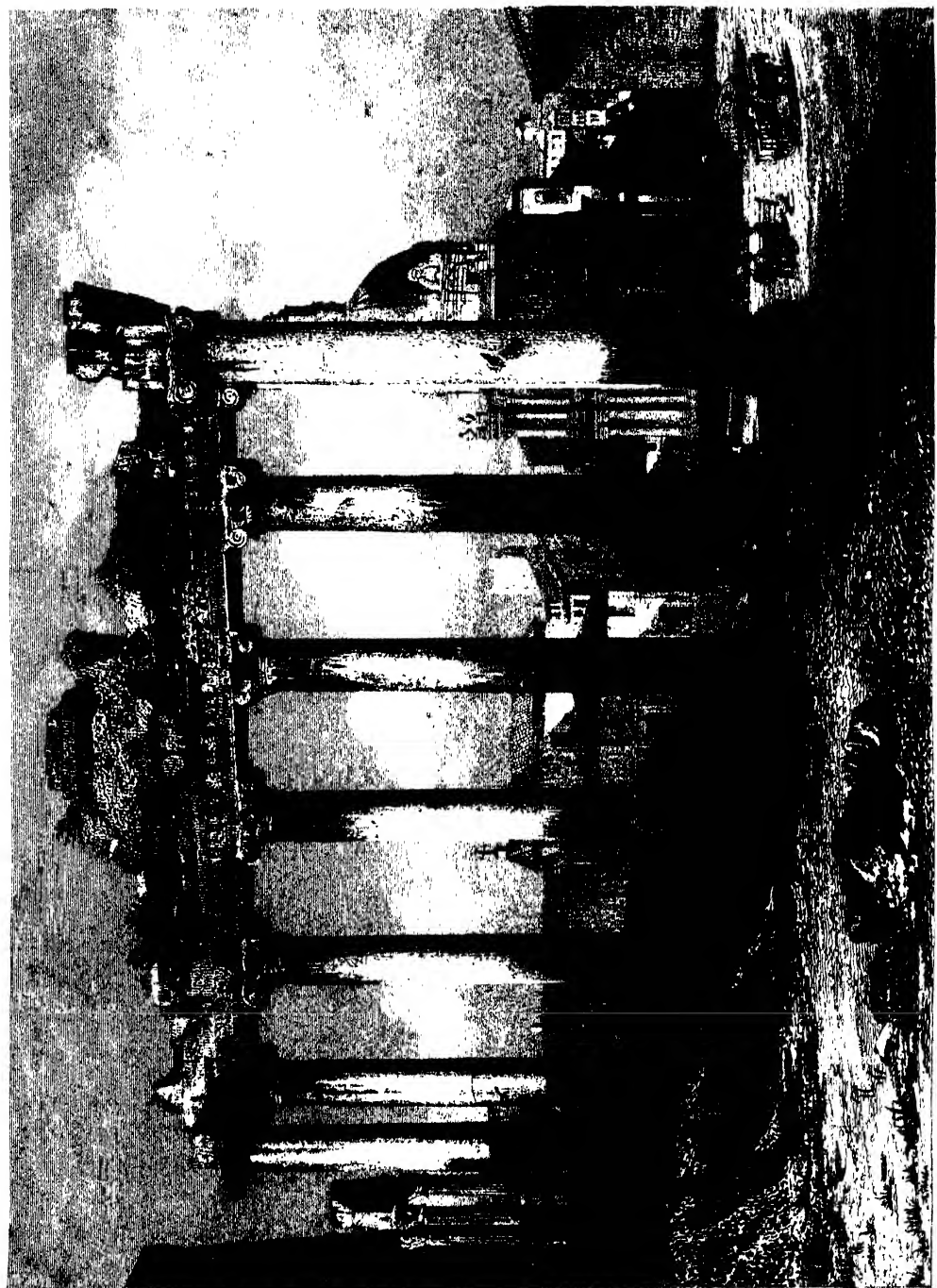
The whole of the buildings forming the three sides of this square were the work of Michael Angelo ; but though the general effect, as approached by the staircase is fine, they are but second-rate productions. We now pass through a portion of the police offices to ascend the tower, and, on arriving at the summit, turn involuntarily to the contemplation of the ruins of the "Forum," leaving an extensive view of the modern city behind us unnoticed. We must, before we proceed to the contemplation of the interesting objects spread beneath us, well understand our situation : we have ascended from the plain of the Campus Martius to the summit of the Capitoline hill. Looking forward, towards the east, a valley stretches away, which was once the Forum Romanum, and is still crowded with its magnificent ruins†. On the right is the Palatine hill, which contained the whole city of Romulus. On the left side, the valley is hedged in by the buildings of the modern city.

Immediately below the spectator, forming the sub-structure of the building he is standing on, is piled the stupendous masonry of the ancient Capitol, and close on the right the Mamertine prisons ; looking forward, but still close under the eye, are the remains of the Temple of Concord, the Arch of Severus, and the Column of Phoca. Farther on, on the left, the fine remains of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina ; and on the right, the Columns of Jupiter Stator and others ; beyond these, on the left, is the Temple of Peace ; in the centre, the site and a few remains of that of Venus and Rome ; whilst the right is enriched by the most beautiful of triumphal arches, that of Titus, and the vast ruins of the Palace of the Cæsars on the Palatine. This noble vista of the most interesting ruins in the world is closed by the stupendous fabric of the Coliseum and the Arch of Constantine, to which we have traced the Via Triumphalis beneath the Arch of Severus, along the Forum, across to the Arch of Titus, and beneath the walls of

* The chief magistrate still bears this title.

† Now commonly known as the Campo-Vaccino.





the Coliseum to that of Constantine, placed by necessity so far from the Capitol, all the near portions of the “Via Triumphalis” being crowded with the trophies of his predecessors, two only of which, those of Severus and Titus, remain. Thus, singularly, are the greater portion of the ruins that remain, to attest the magnificence of Rome, concentrated in one spot*—as if for the more convenient inspection of the barbarian, who shall come to see and wonder at the remains of that Queen of the World, who fell, not by *his* strength, but by her own vices.

How young do the old buildings of the middle ages appear before these relics of twenty centuries!—how recent the dark times of our castles and cathedrals, when compared to the deeper antiquity of these more perfect remains, the delicate foliage of whose acanthus capitals is yet sharp and perfect, while the retreats of brute strength, with their rude carvings, that succeeded these elegant structures—the massy castles of the feudal lords—are crumbling in most instances to utter ruin, demonstrating easily, to feelings excited by the associations of the Forum, the triumph of art over barbaric power. An American, when he arrives in England, or in France, or on the Rhine, coming from a country without an history, that is but yet fifty years old, and whose birth, as a nation, many living men remember, is impressed with a feeling of veneration he cannot control, when he sees, for the first time, the ivy-mantled tower, and the embattled walls of the feudal strongholds of the middle ages: they carry him back to a period when the very name of America was unknown, and are to him pictures in the book of history which have the greatest charm, half-shrouded as they seem by the beautiful, though dim, halo of antiquity. Such impressions may we of the north of Europe receive on the tower of the Campidoglio, in gazing upon remains which existed in the newness of their beauty, when the misty Isles of Britain were themselves unknown, except to the aboriginal savage, or equally rude invader†.

From this commanding situation the spectator may form a very good idea of the proportion of the space, still inclosed by the walls of Aurelian, that is yet occupied by inhabited buildings. Of the famed seven hills, the Palatine, the Esquiline, the Cælian, and the Aventine, are desert; that is to say, they are occupied with crumbling ruins, half-neglected vineyards, and here and there by a

* There are, doubtless, many other remains, but none, with the exception of, perhaps, the Pantheon and the Columns of Antonine and Trajan, to equal those of the Forum.

† It is not intended here to dispute that Britain may not have been visited occasionally by Phœnicians and other commercial nations, before its white cliffs tempted Cæsar, from the coast of Gaul—nor is it intended to dispute that the coast of America may not have been seen or even touched by adventurous navigators before Columbus.

mass of conventual buildings, with its church and campinille, whose matin and vesper bells alone break the silence of the solitude. The Quirinal, and part of the Capitoline, are the only two still covered with the habitations of man; and these, with the plain lying between them and the Tiber, a portion of the Pincian hill, and the inclosure on the west of the river, form scarce a third of the space within the walls—so shrunk is the city within its more permanent girdle.

During the winter months, when Rome is full of strangers, it is computed to contain 170,000 inhabitants; so that we may estimate the whole space within the walls to be capable of containing 510,000, supposing the vacant space to be no more densely built or populated than the inhabited portion; but we may fairly calculate that the ancient population was much more closely packed, when we consider the small size of the apartments in the houses of Pompeii and Herculaneum, so that we may assume that the population was perhaps a million within its walls. It is more difficult to form a guess at the population of the suburbs, as the statements as to their extent are various and contradictory. It would seem that the intention of Aurelian must have been to inclose such portions of the city as had sprung up outside the former fortifications, and doubtless all those suburbs, including the Campus Martius, which contained any public buildings or monuments of importance, were so inclosed; but it is clear also, that *all* were not inclosed, as it is evident that the walls, in many places, passed through the midst of buildings of various descriptions; such as stood in the line being built up in the wall, as every fresh alteration of any portion of the Aurelian line tends to prove. Allowing that extensive suburbs existed outside the circuit of the wall at the period of Aurelian, when Rome was, perhaps, at its highest point of extension and populousness, though past its zenith of power, we may allow 200,000 as the greatest possible population of the suburbs, which would give a total of 1,200,000 as the greatest extent of the population of the ancient city, even accounting for the great number of domestic slaves.

Many of the exaggerations respecting the extent and population of ancient Rome are being fast cleared away by recent researches, and it is now rendered pretty clear that it never equalled that of London, or even Paris,* at the present day. Gibbon in his day imagined from what were then considered the most irrefragable proofs, that the circuit of Aurelian measured twenty-five miles; whilst the more accurate and better conducted labours of more recent archæologists have proved that it was

* Paris, I believe, contained one million, at the last census, without the banlieue; London one million and a half, without Greenwich, &c.

very nearly the same as that which still encircles Rome, and never could have exceeded about twelve miles.*

The estimates of population have been equally exaggerated, some statements carrying it as high as eight millions, in the reign of Claudius; but modern research has again rendered the application of the ^{pruning-knife} necessary to these luxuriant shoots of imagination, and it appears much more likely that the population never reached a million and a half; which would have made it about equal to the last census of that of Paris, if I am correct in stating that at one million without the *banlieue*.

As I stood upon the tower of the Capitol, under the spell of the associations of the Forum, the last reflections upon the subject of recent researches led me involuntarily to feel some regrets that the importance of the great name of Rome should be in any way decreased by modern discoveries. I felt, too, that the demon of romanticism was dealing unfairly with the wondrous story eternized by the records of a Livy, a Cicero, a Tacitus; and that laws and institutions which produced such wonderful results were now treated too lightly; and I could not but feel provoked at the thought of the *bah!* which in any public assembly would follow an allusion to Roman institutions. One great cause of this depreciation was the failure of the French republic, which professing to form itself upon a Roman model, even to the titles of the great officers of state, was so signal a failure; in short, so ludicrous a caricature. It was the Quixote that destroyed classicism, as the knight of Cervantes swept away chivalry.

But let us pause a moment before we dispose of the Romans so unceremoniously; let us but consider, that under their wise institutions, in the time of their greatness, upwards of one hundred and twenty millions of persons were governed in a high degree of prosperity; forming, as Gibbon says, the most numerous society that has ever been successfully united under the same system of government. And with the exception of our own extraordinary empire in India, the same remark might still apply. But still more extraordinary, and worthy of deep consideration, are the means which kept this vast agglomeration of various nations in the necessary subjection.

. One legion, which may be computed at about 12,000 men, sufficed to maintain the domestic tranquillity of Spain; two legions, the whole of the African territory, including Egypt; and three legions were sufficient to secure the

* Vopiscus states the circuit at fifty miles, and Gibbon may have thought that an allowance of half for the exaggeration of the historian was very handsome.

stability of the government among the turbulent and warlike Britons; scarcely a third of our modern peace establishment. In short, 375,000 is considered by Gibbon as the greatest number to be assigned to the standing army of Hadrian, who ruled over upwards of one hundred and twenty millions of souls; while the province of Gaul alone, under improved modern government, with scarce more than the odd twenty millions of subjects to govern, requires a larger standing army than that which maintained order in the whole Roman Empire. These are striking facts. Then, even after the crash of the empire, and the crumbling of its last institutions, under the devastating barbarism of the northern hordes, how long did the spirit of civilization linger in the south! and even the shadow, as it were, of the fallen queen, haunting the region of her past greatness, long gave to Italy and Spain a vast superiority over the north of Europe; which only attained its present position by importing from their ancient seat, the arts, learning, and institutions, it had so long despised. But there were a thousand advantages inherited by modern Europe, which claim from us a lasting veneration of the name of Rome; and one, though perhaps, of lesser importance, yet not least in interest, is their introduction into Europe of a large portion of the fruits, flowers, and culinary vegetables, that are now cultivated in our orchards and gardens. These are permanent benefits which result to us from Roman enterprise, and are simple but beautiful and imperishable monuments of the efforts of a great nation in the race of civilization, which neither time nor revolution have been able to deprive us of.

I left the Capitol dreaming of Roman greatness, which gradually led me to a cursory review of the events which induced its decline, and to those times and events that conduct the wonderful thread of its story through the tangled mazes of the dark ages, and connect it with our own times, and in such a view her fall became even more interesting than her greatness.

Passing over the gradual decline of the empire, the occasional repulses but still gradual encroachments of the barbarians on all sides, we arrive at the fatal year A.D. 409. Even then Rome was still Rome. Shorn of her distant provinces, great part of Italy itself occupied by the barbarians, her pusillanimous Emperor shut up in the fortress of Ravenna; yet the grand centre, the mighty city, the brilliant nucleus, remained unscathed; and for a period of 600 years (since the invasion of Hannibal) no foe had dared approach her walls. In those times the spell of former greatness had long been her sole protection, but the bold Alaric was not to be daunted by a name; and environing the devoted city with his victorious army, her fate was sealed. But ere we proclaim her fall, let us

pause for a moment, to contemplate a few groups of the picture which a contemporary historian* gives of her condition at that moment—the last days of Rome. The hardy virtues of their patrician ancestors, at once soldiers, citizens, and senators, had given place among the nobles to effeminate luxury and degrading vices. But the picture of Rome, at the period of the gothic invasion, is like that of all great cities, which having passed the zenith of their prosperity, fall from the lap of luxury into the pit of destruction. The following piece of portraiture, for instance, might have been drawn from modern, instead of ancient sitters.

“ Sometimes, indeed, these heroes undertake more arduous achievements than their pompous visit to the public baths; they visit their estates in Italy, and procure themselves, by the toil of servile hands, the amusement of the chase.” Might not this have been a modern picture? Again, “ if at any time, but especially on a hot day, they have courage to sail in their painted galleys from the Lucrine lake to their elegant villas, on the coast of Puteoli or Cayeta, they compare their expeditions to those of Caesar or Alexander. Yet, should a fly presume to settle on the silken folds of their gilded umbrellas, should a sunbeam penetrate through some unguarded and imperceptible chink, they deplore their intolerable hardships, and lament, in affected language, that they were not born in the land of the Cimmerians, the regions of eternal darkness.” Surely this was intended as a prophetic picture of some of the great doings of modern yacht clubs. Another sketch: “ Whenever they celebrate with profuse and pernicious luxury their private banquets, the choice of guests is the subject of anxious deliberation. The modest, the sober, the learned, are seldom preferred; but in the list of invitations the most obscure names are frequently inserted; for the continual and familiar companions of the great, are those parasites who practise the most generally useful of all arts, the art of flattery; gaze with rapture on the marble columns and variegated pavements, and strenuously praise the pomp and elegance of their patron, which he is thus taught to consider a part of his personal merit; whilst they eagerly applaud each action and every foolish word that escapes his lips. At table, the birds or fish which appear of an uncommon size are contemplated with curious attention; a pair of scales is accurately applied to ascertain the real weight, and notaries are summoned to attest by an authentic record the truth of such a marvellous event. The harmony of vocal and instrumental music is continually repeated in the palaces of Rome, where sound is preferred to sense, and the care of the body to that of the mind.”

* Ammianus Marcellinus, as quoted by Gibbon.

A party, in falling Rome, was not so very different from a "rout" in our modern Babylon; and if their night amusements were similar, their daylight avocations were it seems not very unlike; the matrons and ladies are described as "continually driving in their covered carriages* round the immense space of the city and suburbs:" so that they too had their daily drive,—their Hyde Park and their Regent Street.

But we must not regard these slaves of luxury as the lineal descendants of the great patricians who conquered the world; few of the old senatorial names remained; and most of those had sunk into poverty, or inferior stations, whilst their places had been supplied by strangers, who continually flocked in from the provinces, and by talent, intrigues, or vices, gradually filled the patrician ranks, and left the senate few of its ancient but familiar names to boast of. These parvenus, however, to make up for the deficiency of ancestral dignity in their original names, assumed the most lofty and sonorous appellations; and the senate was filled, as the historian previously quoted tells us, with such cognomens as Reburus, Pagonius, Fabunius, or Tarrasius, and sometimes five or seven surnames lengthened out the lofty title; as, for instance, Marcus Mæcius Furius Balburus Cæcilianus Placidus,† or something equally ridiculous in its empty vanity. One great family, however, remained, to which pre-eminence was universally accorded; but this, the Anician family, could scarcely be considered as one of the great names of Rome; for it was unknown during the first five ages of the city. It dated its greatness from the period when it was ennobled by the prætorship of Anicius, who gloriously terminated the Illyrian war; but from the reign of Diocletian, to the first extinction of the western empire, that name shone with a lustre which was not eclipsed in public estimation by the majesty of the imperial purple. We may judge, however, by the shortness of the ancestral line of this, the first family of Rome, what those were who contended only for the second place.

The wealth of some of these families was immense, and their estates, scattered from the rising to the setting of the sun, yielded annually in many instances 4,000 pounds of gold, above £160,000 sterling, without computing the stated provision of corn and wine, which had they been sold, might probably have

* Their carruæ or coaches were frequently of solid silver, but they rolled upon the axle-tree, and so were little better than gold and silver carts, unless those of the ladies were suspended, of which we have no proofs.

† See Norris, *Cenotaph. Pisan. Dissert. IV. p. 4.*

equalled in value one-third of the money.* The entire city of Necopolis, which Augustus had founded as an eternal monument of the victory of Actium, was the property of the devout Paula, and it is observed by Seneca that the rivers which had divided hostile nations now flowed through the lands of private citizens. But the inundation of Barbarian hordes[†] had deprived many wealthy families of their distant estates, perhaps their principal means of revenue, particularly in the north; Germany, Gaul, Britain, and the north of Italy, were gone, and fortunate were they whose estates were in the south and east, where the empire was as yet intact. Yet considerable resources remained to many who had lost their estates; the labour of their domestic slaves was a sure source of profit; and their vast accumulations of gold and silver plate[†] afforded for a time the means of still procuring the luxuries to which they had been accustomed.

Amid the general debasement, literature and the arts were still cultivated with zest; and though the latter had sunk into a degraded and false taste, poetry was yet worthily represented in that latter age by the verse of Claudian, to whom public statues were decreed, by admiring Rome. He was the last of her poets—the swan whose song was her death-chaunt.

These sketches may serve to give some idea of the state of Rome at the moment of her fall. The first emotions of the nobles and people were those of surprise and indignation, that a vile barbarian should dare to insult the capital of the world; and they continued to enjoy the pleasures of the hyppodrome and the amphitheatre, while Alaric encircled with his army the devoted city. Like the fated Pompeians, they were immersed in idle pleasure within the walls, while the lava which was about to overwhelm them was concentrating its irresistible force without. But misfortune soon reduced their arrogance, and, cut off from all external supplies, thousands among the poorer multitude died of famine, and their unburied carcasses infected the air with a pestilence that reached the rich, like a retributive vengeance.

In this distress, Basilius, a senator, of Spanish extraction, was deputed to Alaric to propose a capitulation, but declared, in a more lofty style than became their abject condition, that “if he refused them honourable terms, he might prepare to give battle to an innumerable people exercised in arms and animated by despair.” “The thicker the hay, the easier the mowing,” was the concise reply of the barbarian, and this rustic metaphor was accompanied by a loud

* Gibbon.

† Pliny states, that in his time there were many private sideboards that contained more solid silver than had been transported by Scipio from vanquished Carthage.

laugh, expressive of his contempt for the menaces of a populace enervated by luxury before they were emaciated by famine.

It is not possible, in the short space I have allowed myself for a few allusions to the fall of Rome, to follow all the details of the subsequent negotiations and events, for which I refer the curious to the graphic descriptions of Gibbon, to whose pages I am indebted for most of the present details. Suffice it to say, the siege was eventually re-formed, and the devoted citizens, without any other hope, (for they were deserted by the impotent emperor and the scattered armies of the state,) determined upon the fierce resistance of despair; but they could not guard against treachery: most of their slaves and dependants were secretly attached to the cause of the enemy, in whose triumph was their only hope of freedom; and this vile institution of slavery was the more immediate cause of the fall of Rome, as it has been (accompanied with fearful atrocities), of one modern state*, and may be of another, which obstinately perseveres in the inhuman system. At the hour of midnight, the Salarian gate was silently opened by the treachery of a party of slaves, and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the gothic trumpet. Eleven hundred and sixty three years after its foundation, Rome was delivered to the licentious fury of the savage tribes of Germany and Scythia. On the eve of the 24th of August, 409, the porticos, with their gilded roofs, their forests of columns, and their statues of bronze and marble; the wondrous baths, with their thousands of seats of marble†, and their lofty walls covered with curious mosaics, where perpetual streams of hot water gushed through mouths of massive silver; the galleries of art, rich with the accumulated trophies of the conquest of the world; the splendid palaces of her citizen princes, which have been compared to cities within themselves; her public monuments, statues, and obelisks, all were yet perfect. Three days of fire, bloodshed, and destruction, and many of their places were occupied by confused heaps of ruins; so sudden was the fall of Rome. The Goths, as they rushed greedily to their booty, through the Salarian gate, fired the houses on either side the way, to light them to their work of pillage, and Rome was that night the arena of scenes too horrible and distressing to dwell upon. But the Goths were surpassed in their brutal licence, by the reckless slaves, who seized the propitious moment for gratifying their long-smouldering revenge, which now bursting into flame, glutted itself to the full, in the humiliation and disgrace of their tyrants. But the imagination refuses to dwell upon this scene of the awful

* St. Domingo.

† Three thousand were counted in the baths of Diocletian.

drama; let us turn to the fate of the city itself. Many public and private buildings were destroyed near the Salarian gate; among others, the house of Sallust, whose stately ruins for several centuries remained a monument of the gothic triumph; but other public buildings suffered less, whilst the churches were reverentially spared, and many of the finest ancient temples having been devoted to the worship of the new religion, a portion of the splendours of Rome were thus saved from destruction. The fugitives who escaped the calamity, reached, if they could, the hospitable shores of Africa, a province as yet undisturbed, where many had large estates. Among these were Proba, the widow of the chief of the great Anician family, who beheld from the small vessel in which she embarked, the flames which consumed her splendid palace. Along the coast of Egypt and Asia, as far as Constantinople, the Roman fugitives were dispersed; and the village of Bethlem, the solitary residence of St. Jerome and his female converts, was crowded with illustrious beggars of either sex and every age; who excited public compassion by the remembrance of their past fortune. Yet, amid this general destruction and ruin, it is said that only one senator perished by the sword.

To use the emphatic language of the historian of the decline and fall, “the awful catastrophe of Rome filled the astonished empire with grief and terror, and the clergy, who applied to recent events the lofty metaphor of oriental prophecy, were sometimes tempted to confound the destruction of the capital with the dissolution of the globe.”

Rome rose again from her prostration, but no longer as mistress of the world: the spell that “hedged her about” had departed, and though many of her streets and buildings were repaired, and a certain degree of prosperity returned, she was become merely a glittering bait to entice any adventurer who could collect a few thousand followers, to an easy conquest and a tempting spoil. And now, blow followed blow so rapidly, that in the course of a single century her ancient outlines were scarcely discernible, and the localities hallowed by the glories of the past, had changed their names, and were scarcely to be distinguished, except by the few noble buildings that still remained to mark their situation.

A short period of repose occurred, when the Goths having subdued the Italian provinces, established the kingdom of Italy, and endeavoured to emulate the arts and civilization they had so newly destroyed.

Theodric, the greatest of the Gothic kings, quitted the fortress of Ravenna, where, in imitation of the last Emperors, he had taken up his residence, and during the peaceful portion of his reign visited the Imperial city, A.D. 500, and

found much remaining of the ancient splendours, which the barbarians had not destroyed. Many writers of the period assert that but few buildings were wantonly destroyed by the first invaders, their plunder being chiefly confined to the precious metals; but as they confessedly stripped the bronze roofs from many of the most magnificent edifices, a rapid decay in most instances ensued. Theodric, however, found much to admire; he declared that each day the forum of Trajan with its lofty column inspired him with fresh wonder. The ruins of the theatre of Pompey appeared to him a vast mountain artificially hollowed out, and polished in beautiful device, by human industry; and the colossal theatre of Titus, the astonishing Colosseum, still perfect, seemed to him as though a river of gold must have been drained to erect it. He found also fourteen aqueducts still pouring in their copious streams of pure water for the health and comfort of the city.

The spirit of the famous horses which had given a modern name to the Quirinal,* were likewise much admired by the Goths, who caused the brazen elephants of the Via Sacra, that still remained in their places, to be carefully repaired.

Indeed, the Gothic kings, after the first ravages of conquest, were anxious to preserve the beautiful remains of Roman greatness, and statues of bronze or marble were, during the reign of Theodric, carefully collected and preserved, and even a literary lustre was shed over his reign, by the writings of Boethius, the last of the Romans whom Cato or Cicero would have acknowledged for a countryman.

Nearly a century later, however, about 590, Rome reached perhaps its deepest period of depression, and this period was followed by the incursions and depredations of the Lombards, whose audacity rendered it unsafe to venture beyond the walls.

The fertile campagna was desolated, and became the desert it still remains, and but for the influence of christianity, and the firmness and address of Pope Gregory the First, would then most likely have been utterly destroyed, and its very situation forgotten. But it possessed in its new religion a principle of vitality that was not to be extinguished.

The attempts of the emperor Justinian to recover Italy from the weak successors of Theodric, produced the Gothic war of twenty years, and the victories of Belisarius could not balance the fearful depopulation of Italy which then took place; ending though it did in the expulsion of the Goths, and leaving the

* Monte Cavallo.

eunuch Narses, (the first Exarch) governor of Italy, in the name of the Emperor. But he governed a half desert country. How changed from the Italy which the Goths had first invaded, two centuries before; and Rome, its great capital, nearly obliterated from the list of cities! I am not attempting to trace the march of history in these reminiscences of the fate of Rome, but to revive the recollection of such events as influenced the partial preservation of the city and its monuments.

To follow the history of the city we must just hint at its state during the government of the Exarchs, who ruled over Italy till the year 728, although their sway, continually reduced by the incursions of the new enemy, the Lombards, scarcely extended eventually beyond the limits of the present Roman states. The old city, though little benefited by this connection with the eastern empire, enjoyed, nevertheless, comparative tranquillity, disturbed only by the disputes of the clergy, who in the heat of the controversies of the iconoclasts and their adversaries, separated the churches of Constantinople and Rome; and the Popes, at last throwing off their allegiance to the eastern Emperor, commenced their temporal reign with which the fortunes of the city are hereafter to be connected; though the Exarchs of Ravenna were allowed still a nominal sway, in the name of the successors of Constantine, till the crowning of Charlemagne as a new Emperor of the west, A.D. 800, where ends the civil, and commences the ecclesiastical history of Rome.

One feels at a loss, however, whether to divide ancient from modern history, at the point where Rome falls under the arms of Alaric, or at the point where the northern nations first assume a political importance, about the period of Charlemagne; and, perhaps, the latter would be the more correct division, though it is tempting to mark the close of ancient story with the striking catastrophe of Rome; and painful and uninteresting to drag along the drama after the great denouement; merely, as it were, to shew the spectators the funeral, and read them the epitaph of the heroine.

At the period of the revolt of the Popes from the power of the eastern emperors, the boundary of the Roman empire, so far as the city of Rome was the centre of it, had receded from the ocean, the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates; and the city of Romulus was again reduced to her ancient territory; from Viterbo to Terracina, and from Narni to the mouth of the Tiber. So that the empire of the crozier commenced within the same limits as its precursor of the sword. For the Lombards had encroached upon the Exarchate, as far as Viterbo on the north, whilst the same enemy hedged it in as far as Terracina on the south; occupying, as the Dutch of Beneventum, about the same space as the modern kingdom of Naples.

The Popes, however, were not left in quiet enjoyment of their independence of the Exarchs ; for the king of the Lombards was soon at the gates of Rome, which was only delivered by the arms of Charles Martel ; who fresh from that victory over the Saracens, which perhaps saved all Europe from Mahomedanism, hastened at the call of the Pope to his assistance, and dispersed the Lombards, who retreated to their own territories. His reward was the title of Patrician of Rome, a title which, in the chronology of princes, succeeds that of Exarch in the government of middle Italy. The Exarchate, now by virtue of conquest possessed by Martel, was presented by him to the Popes, as the estate of the church ; and being confirmed by Pepin, his successor, and Charlemagne the son of Pepin, at his coronation, by Leo III. at Rome, in the year 800 of the Christian era, may be considered as the true commencement of the rule of the Popes as temporal princes : they were, however, considered for a time as vassals of the empire ; the title of Patrician conferring the actual supreme power upon the Emperor, who now reigning over Spain, France, Germany, and Italy, might in point of extent of territory be worthily deemed a new Emperor of the west. But the city of Rome was not the centre of that empire, and consequently derived but little benefit from the new state of things ; indeed, many precious things were carried away from her precincts for the decoration of the northern capital of her barbarian lord ; who also, with the permission of the Popes, stripped the palace of Ravenna of its mosaics, for the decoration of his halls at Aix-la-Chapelle.

The succeeding revolutions of Italy had but little influence on the fate of the city, which, however, in the quarrels and feuds which soon took place between the Popes and the Emperors, suffered still further injury : the remains of her great public buildings became converted into fortresses ; and what the fierce strife of the Guelph and Ghibbeline factions did not effect, the intestine quarrels between the Pontiffs and the Roman people, or at a later period the contentions of the Colonna and Ursini, completed.

Through all this discord, however, the power of the Popes gradually increased, as the influence of Christianity became more deeply felt ; driving half Europe into the mad enterprise of the Crusades, and enabling Gregory the Seventh, without wealth and without arms, to triumph over the great Barbarossa. Nor was the progress of their power much impeded by their temporary residence in Avignon, or by the republican attempts, at distant periods, of Crescentius or Rienzi.

Still, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, while the various republics of Italy which had arisen from the wrecks of the ancient municipal cities of the empire, began to enrich themselves by peaceful commerce, and encourage arts

and letters, Rome was still a sunken and impoverished city ; her ancient monuments were disappearing, and even her aqueducts had become ruinous and useless. But Boniface the Eighth by a happy expedient, restored its sinking star to its zenith. He had sufficient learning to recollect and revive the secular games which were celebrated in Rome at the conclusion of every century ; and announced to pilgrims visiting Rome at that period, the customary *indulgences* of the holy time. The consequence of this proclamation was, that on the 1st of January, 1300, Rome was thronged with a multitude from all parts of Europe. Some state at two millions the number of pilgrims attracted by this experiment ; others, at the more moderate computation of two hundred thousand.

A trifling oblation from each individual would accumulate a royal treasure ; and priests stood night and day, with rakes in their hands, to collect the heaps of gold and silver that were poured on the altar of St. Paul. This was the talisman that was wanting to lift the Popedom to the zenith of its power ; and the city soon felt the influence of its greatness. The nobles, who had hitherto lived in fortress-houses that resembled prisons, now, in emulation of the efforts of the Pisans and Florentines, began to build themselves noble palaces, and Rome began again to assume the appearance of a capital. The people, too, felt the advantage of such an influx of peaceful visitors, and thought it a long period to wait for another occasion of profit ; whilst Clement the Sixth, obligingly complying with their wishes, proclaimed the festival for the end of the half century ; the result of which was equally profitable with the first, both to the church and the people of Rome.

The impatience of the Popes subsequently reduced the period again to thirty-three years, and then to twenty-five years, and the great wealth thus flowing in, though it corrupted the church, restored Rome. St. Peter's was rebuilt ; two of the ancient aqueducts restored ; splendid fountains arose in every quarter of the city, and Rome became a worthy capital of Christendom. Her churches, glittering in the gold and silver that their votaries had so profusely lavished, surpassed the splendours of her once-famed pagan temples ; and a Michael Angelo and a Raphael were found to decorate the great christian metropolis with works rivalling the wonders of ancient art.

Sixtus V. carried these improvements forward with the greatest spirit, and during his reign Rome was so changed from a confused mass of rude fortresses, filth, and ruins, to a regular and beautiful city, that those who had been absent some years scarcely believed it the same city. Streets were cleared and made regular ; obelisks that had lain buried for centuries were again reared upon handsome

pedestals, in conspicuous situations ; many ancient remains were cleared from the surrounding rubbish, and opened to the admiration of the awakening Romans, whilst excavations were daily bringing to light a whole people of statues, whose beauty and perfection were the astonishment of Europe.

But this overflow of gold presented more temptations than the fortitude of man could withstand. And the great abuses in the state of the too profitable *indulgences* had already produced the Reformation—that first great blow to the power of the Popes. About the same time, too, that the Reformation struck its blow at the supremacy of the church, the city received a shock little less severe. Its capture by the troops of Charles V., under the Constable Bourbon, were little less calamitous than that by the Goths of Alaric. Indeed, it has been said that the Christian soldiery, of the sixteenth century, did more to mutilate and destroy the ancient buildings of Rome, than the Goths of the fifth ; and that the labours of the great Sixtus had been rendered more necessary by those recent spoliations, than by the devastation of Alaric.

The loss by the reformation of the great revenues, previously collected from the piety of great part of Germany and England, with portions of Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, were, however, not at first materially injurious to the splendour of the Romish church, or her metropolitan city ; and up to the close of the seventeenth century she continued to decorate with new offerings her splendid shrines. During the eighteenth century, however, the decline of the revenues and influence of the papacy was rapid ; yet a last gleam of splendour was shed over the sinking power, by the magnificent outlays of Ganganelli, and his successor Braschi ; in the formation and decoration of the Vatican Museums, under the influence of the classical *furor* with which Winckelman and other enthusiastic antiquaries had inoculated the scientific world. Notwithstanding these marks of remaining splendour, both the government and people were greatly impoverished, and the city was sinking into a third decay. The French revolution broke in upon the scene ; and the proclamation declaring the Roman states a French province, under the title of *department du Tibre*, was, perhaps, eventually an improvement, even to the condition of the clergy. It most certainly was to the general state of the city and people ; for there can be no doubt but that the French effected more salutary reforms, both legislative and administrative, than all the Popes of the preceding century combined ; whilst the cleansing and opening of the streets, the decoration and clearing of public places, and the means taken to protect and preserve the ruins, effected under their regime, have been the commencement of a new era for Rome. Pius the Seventh, on his restoration, after

the fall of Napoleon, continued and completed many improvements which he had commenced ; and Gregory the Sixteenth, the present Pontiff, though possessing but the shadow of the revenue of a Pope, and little more influence in Europe than any other petty sovereign of an unimportant principality, does much to advance the general amelioration. I am anxious, in my next promenade, to examine in detail the present state of the “ eternal city,” and behold at leisure all that time has spared, or the church created to embellish the ever interesting precincts of Rome.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCHES OF ROME.

Who does not hasten to the lofty portals of St. Peter's, with anxious and highly wrought expectation? It is almost invariably the first spot visited by the traveller on his arrival in Rome; and whether a disciple of the Romish church, or of one of the many sects that her abuses have driven from her bosom, the attraction of that glorious shrine is the same. The vast monument of the supremacy of the Popes is even a more powerful magnet than the relics of the dominion of the Cæsars. I hastened towards the bridge of St. Angelo, admired the general effect of the statuary of Bernini, with which it is decorated; cast a hasty glance at the castle, and pushed forward towards St. Peter's. It broke upon me—but like many who have preceded me, I was disappointed; so much so, indeed, that I determined not to attempt a description until I had experienced the effect of a second impression. Had I at once advanced into the interior, this first sensation might have been effaced, but I retired, somewhat chilled in my enthusiasm, resolving to defer my intended exploration.

After having again and again revisited the great cathedral, the exterior still strikes me as at first; there is nothing about it, with the exception of the two superb fountains, and the circling colonnade, worthy of its reputation. The portico, or rather let me say façade, is decidedly bad: I do not mean incorrect, or inconsistent with any of the accepted rules of art, (though even that might be urged in many respects,) but badly imagined and designed.

The Italians tell you that Carlo Maderno, whose design it is, made it rather low, in order not to conceal the dome; which is certainly sufficiently concealed by standing so far back, in consequence of the immense length of the nave, without being further hidden by a too lofty façade. But the fact is, that the façade, though as low as the body of the building would admit, is sufficiently high for the display of the finest architectural effects to be obtained from magnitude



of parts, were only the true height made manifest by judicious design, which should even have increased the real magnitude by the illusion of art; but instead of this, its truly magnificent dimensions are concealed by injudicious combinations, and it appears less in every way than it really is; thus suffering instead of benefiting by the creations of the architect. The immense columns stretch at once from base to summit, forming, as it were, a measure placed against the building, by means of which the eye is enabled to grasp its extent at a glance, uninterrupted by that just division of parts by which the span might be multiplied, and the effects of immensity attained. Turn the eye for a moment, in imagination, towards the wonderful Coliseum, so immense, so astonishing in its apparent vastness; whilst it is, in fact, scarcely higher than the façade of St. Peter's. But its height is, as it were, multiplied; the eye is carried up by degrees, tier above tier, from the massive Doric of the basement to the lighter Ionic above, and still higher to the more slender proportions of the graceful Corinthian; and thus prevented from grasping at once the true dimension, the spectator is led, (through the idea of one building piled upon another,) to form that conception of immensity, which the contemplation of the Coliseum never fails to leave upon the mind.

The front of our own St. Paul's presents a more imposing aspect, and creates a greater impression of magnitude, than that of St. Peter's, which is doubtless attributable to the division of the elevation, by placing a Corinthian order above the Doric. For I am well persuaded, that did one order of Doric or Corinthian columns occupy the whole height, after the manner of a Greek or Roman portico, that the apparent altitude would be wonderfully diminished, and under these considerations, I do not regret the non-adoption of the simple portico upon an antique model, designed for St. Peter's by Michael Angelo.

To illustrate this position, let us consider the effect of a huge mass of granite, say 100 feet in height, which in the expanse of the desert appears but a great pebble, whilst the same mass, wrought into the limbs of a Memnon, becomes, though deprived of two-thirds of its real bulk, gigantic. So much is an object magnified by a just and symmetrical division of its surface.

I am aware that a general application of this principle would militate against some parts of the practice of ancient architectural art, but our more complicated constructions appear to require some modification of those pure, or rather let us say, severe precepts. These remarks may appear fanciful to our architects, but I cannot help thinking, that to one totally unshackled by theories and rules of art, they will present at least some appearance of truth. So much for the façade:

the dome, which, for reasons before hinted at, must be lost on a near approach, has other faults than that of position. For want of a more swelling curve, its outline is not near so imposing as it might have been; and from the great cornice of the drum being broken into petty projections over each column of its gallery, it has, notwithstanding its superior magnitude, none of that sublimity of repose which characterises the dome of St. Paul's: in short, as an architectural composition, I have arrived at the conclusion, which I believe others have done before me, that our own St. Paul's far surpasses the great St. Peter's. Many have strangely urged, as one of the extraordinary beauties of St. Peter's, that in consequence of the "extreme justness" of its proportions, it is much larger than it appears to be; a fact which I conceive to be its most glaring defect, and upon which I found the triumph of the British architect, who, upon a less scale, consequently with fewer means, has produced a grander whole; for it is universally conceded that St. Paul's appears more vast than it really is, which appears to me the real triumph of art, in making the most of the means employed, instead of the least.

Such were my reflections while standing upon the broad piazza, and they refer of course only to the respective *exteriors*. But the bronze portal of the Roman cathedral once passed, all comparisons were at an end. St. Peter's stood alone, unrivalled, wonderful!—the gorgeous dome suspended in mid-air, is a firmament; the place indeed has an atmosphere of its own, and in this vastest of cathedrals, the temperature knows no change; neither the enervating *scirocco*, nor the piercing *tramontana*, nor winter nor summer, influence the soft air of this mighty temple. It is the largest covered area in the world; and with many defects which the hypercritical might discover, is perhaps as near perfection as human art upon so large a scale may attain. Its great extent has not interfered with the beauty of its smallest detail; it is rich, elaborately rich, in every part, yet every enrichment miraculously tends to form and assist the grand *ensemble*—like the varying scenes and even episodes of a fine drama, which all minister to the progress and developement of one great denouement.*

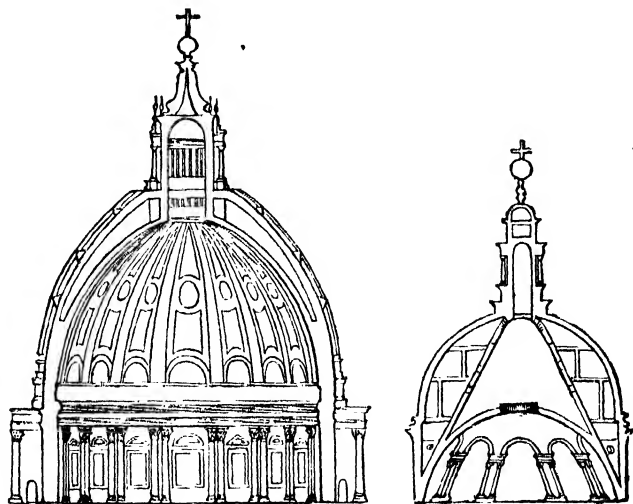
* Shelley was of a different opinion, and it is somewhat difficult to maintain steadfastly one's own opinion in opposition to such an adversary; and the only ground upon which I can persuade myself to combat the influence which the very name of Shelley gives to the slightest and most inconsiderate remark, is the consideration that his opinions upon works of art are rather to be considered as rhapsodical descriptions than artistic criticisms. They teem with all the poetry and refinement of thought and expression that a subtle and elegant mind never fails to associate with the object in contemplation; but they are the words of the poet rather than the artist. Shelley certainly did not look at St. Peter's with the eye of an architect. All are liable to misconception, when speaking of an art that has not been made an object of particular study. Lady Blessington makes some strange remarks upon the

After the first astonishing coup-d'œil, when the dazzled eye begins to seek some object upon which to fix a closer scrutiny, I was, perhaps, most struck at the entrance, by the grandeur and beauty of the holy-water founts on either side, each supported against the enormous pilasters by two infant figures of white and polished marble, which appear, from the centre of the nave, and in reference to the proportion of the building, of the natural size; and only upon a close approach is it, that a full-grown man finds himself a dwarf by the side of these infant colossi. The extent and dimensions of some of the most celebrated cathedrals of christendom are marked upon plates of metal let into the pavement, and advancing up about one-fifth of the length may be seen the tablet marking the extent of St. Paul's of London. Then comes that of the Duomo of Milan, next that of Florence, then that of St. Sophia of Constantinople, and lastly that of St. Mark of Venice. But the largest of these, St. Paul's, falls far short of the length of St. Peter's, which is between six and seven hundred feet, and being unincumbered with pews, or other paltry divisions, the eye sweeps along its vast avenues uninterrupted except by a few scattered human figures dotted about at intervals, which serve as a happy scale to measure the perspective; by which the most distant figures are reduced to mere pigmies. This first impression of expanse is increased when we look above, and see the enrichments of the vaulted ceiling, beautifully softened, though not rendered indistinct by the height of 440 feet: one might imagine himself wandering in the interior of a mountain, its vast caves lined with the accumulated riches of centuries, arranged in beautiful order by some superhuman hand; like the wonders of the mundus subterraneus of old father Kircher.

Like all Italian, and I might nearly say all European churches, commenced later than the tenth or eleventh centuries, when the cross became more decidedly accepted as the symbol of the religion, the plan of St. Peter's is cruciform; and as you approach the intersection of the transept, the great dome opens above you glittering in its purple and gold amid the flood of light that it sheds upon the vast masses below: and of all this splendour, nothing seems perishable; the cerulean blue is lapis lazuli, the glowing devices are not painting, but mosaic, and the gold is plated upon bronze; so that damp, which have done their work of devastation in St. Paul's, touch nothing here. All is fresh and beautiful as though finished yesterday. But how can I compare for a moment the dark

Duomo at Florence, misconceiving, as well she might, a rather obscure passage in Forsyth. Voltaire speaks of the Sorbonne and other buildings of the age of Louis XIV. as the great masterpieces of architecture; and Moliere alludes to Michael Angelo and Raphael, as those *Mignards* of their age.

dingy interior of the dome of St. Paul's with the glittering vault of St Peter's! In commending the noble exterior effect of that work, I did not extend my admiration to its interior, where it is a lamentable failure; for even the grand and swelling outline of its dome is not made to minister to interior magnificence, and so becomes a mere cheat; a casket without a jewel. The English architect has wanted either the skill or boldness of the Italian, and so has lost to his interior full half the space contained in his dome. This will be best explained by the annexed sketches, where a section of both domes is given, drawn to a scale which shews also the relative proportion which they bear to each other in dimension. It will there be seen that the swelling outline of the dome of Wren is but a mere trumpery shell of wood-work and lead, whilst the structure at its apex is supported by a pile of masonry, which reduces the interior dome to contemptible dimensions when compared to St. Peter's, where the vast shell of the dome itself is boldly composed of stone, and forms itself the support of the lantern or cupolino, leaving the entire dimensions of the vast cupola open to the interior; which that of St. Paul's is not only deprived of, but of the light also, which should stream in from the lantern as it does at St. Peter's, irradiating the vast surface of the vault*.



But I was speaking of the imperishable nature of the materials employed in St. Peter's. Here the masterpieces of Raphael and Domenichino are rendered

* It may, perhaps, be as well to mention, that the dome of St. Peter's is formed of three shells, with space sufficient for passages between; but this does not affect the general statement of the similarity of form and dimension of the exterior and interior, and of the light thus obtained from the top.

imperishable; and you behold the "Transfiguration" of the former, and the "St. Girolamo" of the latter, metamorphosed to stone by the elaborate wonders of mosaic, and thus transmitted to remote ages for the wonder and admiration of thousands yet unborn, when the more frail originals shall have crumbled beneath the withering touch of time*. All the *pictures* in St. Peter's (and its pictures would form a noble gallery) have been, or are in progress, of being transmuted to the endurable materials of mosaic; and thus the destroyer, time, is less to be feared in this temple of temples, than the destroyer, man.

One of the great beauties of this interior, and of the churches of Italy generally, is derived from the diversity of effect, and relief, produced by the variety of colour displayed in the rich materials of which they may be rather said to be composed than merely decorated. This is one great though unacknowledged cause of the admiration of the French and other strangers; but more particularly those of Protestant countries, and most of all, the English. In the rage of Reformation in the northern countries of Europe, it was deemed necessary to depart in every way as far as possible from the Romish rites; and therefore, as the Roman churches were rich in all that the creations of art, or the offerings of the devout, could bestow, the reformers reduced the houses of God to mere white-washed barns; tearing down the embroidered tapestries, breaking the statuary, obliterating the gilding, and scraping out the pictures, as mere gauds and vanities, if not something worse. The succeeding architects managed to meet the demand for white-washed interiors thus created, by deciding 'ex cathedra,' by some extraordinary process of reasoning, that the use of coloured marbles (or imitations) in the interior of public buildings, "is a species of false taste;" and as a great deal of genius and talent was spared by this arrangement, as well as money, our finest interiors are invariably of one monotonous, cold, white or stone colour, the chilling effect of which can only be fully appreciated by those who have seen the temples of the prosperous age of the church of Rome, particularly in Italy. Another cause has also assisted the northern architects in carrying out the white-wash style; they have become such servile copyists of the remains of ancient art, that all for which an "authority" cannot be produced, in the ruins of some Greek or Roman temple, is denounced as "incorrect:" and thus, as only the exterior of these monuments remains in any degree of preser-

* Though less celebrated than the 'Transfiguration' and the 'St. Girolamo,' Guerchino's great *capo d'opera*, the martyrdom of St. Petronilla, perhaps, surpasses either of them, for in addition to the pure design of Raphael, and the graceful conception of Domenichino, it possessed all the grandeur of Michael Angelo, and, what none of the three pretended to, all the magic of *chiar-oscuro*. These sentiments seem to have inspired the copyist, for it is allowed to be the finest mosaic in the world.

vation, and consequently no direct authority is afforded them for interior decoration, they have coolly taken the exterior which remains, as the models for the interiors which have perished, and so stick to the bare stone walls inside as well as out, abandoning in their stone-coloured mania, those noble auxiliaries of interior decoration, painting, bronze, mosaic, and coloured marbles ; and the few who have attempted to break through the despotism thus established, have been denounced as quacks, or men ignorant of the rules of their profession.

But a new era in art is arising, and scholastic prejudice is fast losing its hold ; a new term has been added to the architectural vocabulary, Polychromy, which is beginning to be studied perforce, even by the most rigid devotees of the old system. For some provokingly persevering archæologists have now proved beyond a doubt, by minute investigation, what had long been suspected by some, that even the *exteriors* of the finest architectural remains of Attica, now blanched by time, once had their massive proportions relieved by the enlivening effects of colour ; and that a regular system of polychromy prevailed with the Greek architects in the purest period of Grecian art. Not merely did variegated marble columns, of different colours, adorn their porticos, but delicate pencillings of gold heightened the effect of different portions of the cornice, and even the grounds of the reliefs which decorated the frieze were painted with arbitrary colours, such as blue or red. These discoveries will doubtless lead to more enlarged views upon the subject ; exteriors will be effected, so far as natural polychromy is concerned ; by which I mean the use of such suitable materials as possess natural variety of colour, such as rich marbles, metals, &c. &c. ; and interiors will receive the much-needed assistance of what may be termed legitimate polychromy ; by which I mean a judicious admixture of pictorial with the sculptured embellishments.

Many, unreflecting, or unacquainted with the principles of art, admire the glorious interior of St. Peter's, without being aware of this great cause of its extraordinary effect upon them ; others without admitting it ; and Symond, in his otherwise clever book, actually expresses an opinion that " an uniform wash, of a light warm tint, would much improve the effect : "—he would whitewash St. Peter's !—My position may however be farther illustrated by a reference to the splendid mausoleums of the Popes, which link a glittering history of the march of art during four centuries, and compose one of the grand features of this noble pile. Those, the works of Giacomo della Porta, Polajola, San Gallo, and others of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, and even those of Bernini, towards the end of the latter period, are formed of varied materials. The massive sarcophagus, of red granite or porphyry, the colossal figure of the Pope, of

bronze, or perhaps of the pure Carara stone ; whilst the draperies of the allegorical figures beneath are of variously coloured marbles ; the pedestal, with its rich *entourage*, finished and clipped with bronze ornaments of elaborate workmanship, relieved with gilding ; and, perhaps, a noble canopy above, forming a drapery of stone, veneered with jasper, or lapis lazuli, and fringed with a massive border of gold. These are the tombs that a stranger looks at with wonder and admiration, until, turning to his faithful companion, the guide-book, he finds that the plain " classic " white marble masses of Thorwaldsen or Canova, are the things which it is good taste to admire ; and he then admires accordingly.

The " pure taste " system is more felicitously applicable to detached works, but when we apply it in full force to monumental decoration, we deprive our interiors of one of the greatest accessories of splendour and effect. One English architect*, indeed, breaking through the trammels of his school, has said, in speaking of St. Peter's, in a recent work, " whoever has mounted up into the gallery of the tambour, contemplated the rich blaze of mosaic above, lighted by the cupolino, and the splendid effect produced by the decorated wall, must acknowledge the magic combinations of *form, light, and colour*."

The description of each tomb, in this vast hall of monuments, might occupy a volume ; for not only is its beauty of construction and design worthy of careful and minute examination, but also its associations, both historical and artistical, are so full of interest, that it might serve as the text to an essay upon the history of the civilization of its period. But space and time preclude the possibility of entering into such details, however delightful to an enthusiast in affairs of art. Yet must I note one or two, whose inscriptions raised pictures in the mind of more than ordinary interest. The first that caught my attention was that of the more celebrated, than virtuous, Matilda of Mantua, whose services to the church are commemorated in the basso-relievo of the sarcophagus at her feet, which represents one of the greatest triumphs of the church in her greatest days, the prostration of the Emperor Henry IV. at the feet of Gregory VII., a triumph achieved by the treasures of the bigotted Matilda, which thus purchased for her a tomb in St. Peter's. None pass the magnificent monument of the proud Farnese, Paul III., without remarking the beauty of this great work of Guglielmo della Porta ; and few but quickly turn from the statue of the Pope, ennobled as it is by the flattery of the sculptor's art, to the lovely figure of Justice beneath, deemed too lovely to remain without the drapery which Bernini has supplied

* Donaldson. I quote from memory, but believe I am in substance correct.

with but a niggard hand; evidently unwilling to conceal, however small, a portion of so fair a work. Then there is the tomb of the too famous Christina, who crowned a life of vice by the apostacy which gained her a tomb in this splendid cemetery.

The monument of the last of the Stuarts, too, is interesting to an Englishman, though exciting but feelings of disgust, mingled with pity, for the bigotry which *would* have bartered the liberties of a people, and which *did* sacrifice a throne; and these feelings are not supplanted by more agreeable ones, when one reflects upon the mock magnanimity of George IV., who, as Prince Regent, gave the commission for this tomb to Canova, and permitted the inscription of *James III., King of England*, and his sons, *Henry IX. and Charles III.* But the chilling effect of this mass of white marble is soon effaced by turning to some of the surrounding monuments—that, for instance, of Innocent VIII., the great work of Pollajoli; or the more magnificent work of Bernini, where, with poetical thought, the sculptor has represented Death, beneath the statue of the Pope, inscribing in his book of fate the name of “Urban VIII.”* Near to this tomb, under the gorgeous bronze pavilion of the principal altar, which occupies the centre of the cross, beneath the dome, is the entrance to the confessional and tomb of St. Peter, round which a hundred golden lamps continually burn. At this point, also, is the entrance to the subterranean chapel, which occupies the space between the pavement of the ancient Basilica, and that of the present structure erected on its site. Before descending the dark staircase, the stranger involuntarily looks once more towards the brilliant vault above; around which he sees, glittering in colossal letters of gold upon a purple ground, the venerable motto of the church of Rome, “TU ES PETRUS, ET SUPER HANC PETRAM ÆDIFICABO ECCLESIAM MEAM, ET TIBI DABO CLAVES REGNI CŒLORUM.”

But I must not attempt to describe my descent to the vaults, though they contain many curious and very ancient monuments which belonged to the original church, and likewise relics that are considered so precious that women are allowed no entrance there. Why the presence of females has been deemed injurious to the relics, I know not; for certainly the Roman Catholic faith has far more, and far sincerer, votaries among that sex than ours; as may be fairly inferred from the numbers who continually crowd the churches, where the admix-

* Urban VIII. published a bull excommunicating persons taking snuff in church, and as the pernicious influence of the western weed travelled eastwards, it met with equally strenuous opposition, for Sultan Amurath declared smoking punishable with death. Both these dame Partingtons have failed in their attempts, and snuff-taking in Italy, and smoking in Turkey, have certainly not decreased since that period.

ture of men is comparatively small. Speaking of relics, I must not omit the ancient bronze statue of St. Peter, said to have been "modelled from the life," but evidently a specimen of debased Greek art, posterior to the age of Constantine. Around this statue continually waits a crowd of devotees, of all ranks, anxiously expecting their turn to kiss the great toe, which is now, like that of Michael Angelo's statue of Christ, at Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, nearly worn away. This is like killing with kindness!

Ere we quit the mighty Cathedral, let us say a word of its architects. The names of St. Peter's and Michael Angelo Buonarotti have been so blended together, by tourists, memoirists, and biographers, that they have become almost synonymous; and in the amplitude of his fame, Buonarotti has absorbed that of those who had better claim to the title of author of that great work. First in the list of claimants comes Bramante, the original planner and designer of the mass. Nicholas V., in 1447, conceived the idea of rebuilding the ruinous fabric of the ancient Basilica, which had existed above a thousand years, and replacing it by a church which should be the greatest work of human hands. Part of the ancient Basilica was immediately taken down, but the first stone of the new edifice was not laid till 1506, by Giulio II. Its magnificent plan was traced by Bramante, and though after his death the studies and designs which he left were considerably altered and departed from by his successors, the main ideas were eventually carried into execution; and the edifice as it now exists, is, as a mass, the idea of Bramante. He it was who, taking the hint from Brunelleschi's effort at Florence, conceived the idea of the wonderful dome; so that if one of its architects, more than another, deserves the exclusive fame of its design, it is doubtless Bramante.

His successor, under Leo X., was Giulio di San Gallo; then came the great Raphael, with five associated assistants, all of whom, with their principal, died within the short space of six years; and Paul III. appointed Antonio di San Gallo. He, in his turn, was succeeded by Michael Angelo, who at first declined the honour of the appointment, alleging modestly that *architecture* was not his art; a feeling fully borne out by many of his works, in which ignorance of its simplest rudiments is but too often displayed. His modesty was, however, overcome; and during his long life the work made greater progress than with any of his predecessors. From this circumstance, united with his great fame as a sculptor and painter, his name has become more associated with the work than that of any of his predecessors or followers; and more particularly so, as it fell to his lot to erect the greater portion of the dome, which he enriched with his

splendid designs*, forming a work which must have struck all Europe with wonder.

The celebrated Vignola, under Pius V., succeeded Michael Angelo, who, though an inferior genius, was a far better architect, as many of his numerous works will fully testify. The dome and greater part of the interior were eventually completed by Giacomo della Porta; and finally came Carlo Maderno, who, under Paul V., finished the great nave, and erected, from his own design, the façade, with which I have found so much fault. But I soften towards him when I reflect that he also designed the two fountains, which I so much admired on my first approach, and which have so strongly impressed some of Rome's most celebrated pilgrims; calling into existence ideas of beauty which must ever be associated with their falling waters.

This completed the essential parts of the work, and in 1654, having been in hand nearly two hundred years, it had cost, according to the Cavaliere Fontana, 47,000,000 scudi; which at a rough guess we may estimate at £11,000,000 sterling; an immense sum, when we consider the cheapness of labour during the time that greater part of the work was executed. Under Alexander VII., who was not contented with the piazza, although already decorated by the noble fountains of Maderno, Bernini planned and commenced the semicircular colonnades, which, terminated under Clement X., gave the finishing touch to the great whole, that had occupied upwards of two centuries of unremitting labour and profuse expenditure.

Thus was triumphantly completed this wonderful monument of the power and wealth of the church of Rome, the most powerful engine that ever worked upon the passions of man. The world, as at present socially and politically constituted, will produce no second St. Peter's: it is one of the gigantic efforts of the youth of a new civilization; of the powerful working of a fresh state of things. It is like one of the vast designs which enthusiastic artists attempt, and sometimes complete, in their youth; and which they themselves, in their maturer years, are astonished to think they should have had the hardihood to conceive, and the temerity to attempt. In some future and far distant age, after another barbaric darkness, the follower of some great convulsion, shall have passed over the enlightened world; and when a new, and strange, and vigorous state of things shall

* These, however, were suggested by the plans of Bramante, as may be proved by the published design. But it must be acknowledged that Michael Angelo imparted to them that grandeur of style which was the great characteristic of his genius.

eventually arise from its chaos, like seeds luxuriantly shooting from a fallow soil, then may such a monument as St. Peter's again arise—but not till then.

Such are a few of the reflections forced upon me during a day's wanderings in this great church, or rather group of churches, for many of its lateral chapels are larger than an ordinary church. I have not attempted to describe or even hint at all the riches that the greatest artists, of the two greatest centuries, in the history of modern art, have congregated there. All that the graceful taste of Domenichino designed, all that the luxuriant fancy of Pietro da Cortona imagined, must be seen; description is too vague for such a subject. But in a word, here are united the rich contributions of all the greatest names of modern art in its noblest periods; and, by a species of magic, blended into one harmonious whole, in this justly called temple of temples; forming a reality (and perhaps the only one) that surpasses the vivid dreams of fancy.

Never can such results be realized again, for philosophy stepping in, threw down the supremacy of the fine arts and the church together. The church had been the nurse, though not the mother of modern art; in its revival in the thirteenth century, she saw a new agent of power, and carefully cultivated such a means of appealing to the passions, without too widely awakening the reason; and thus did the churches of the next three centuries become galleries of art, as well as temples of religion. But the enthralment of the mind, through the medium of the senses, was doomed to be broken through: the advance of civilization and education led to rapid and general development of intellect; reason trampled upon the arts by which she had been led captive; the supremacy of the church was shaken to its foundation, and with it the school of art she had fostered. Philosophy came, and the arts fell. "Galileo was born the day that Michael Angelo died."

In the adjoining palace of the Vatican are the famous Sistine and Paoline chapels; but an opportunity to describe them will occur when I assist at the ceremonies of the holy week; they must not detain me now; and I hasten to perform a pilgrimage that ought to have preceded my visit to St. Peter's.

At the other extremity of Rome, near the Naples gate, is the palace of the Lateran*, the original residence of the Popes; and adjoining, is 'the first church,' St. Giovanni Laterano,—the first building ever publicly consecrated to christian worship, the Basilica aurea†; in short, in the words of the old priest who was my

* This name preserves from oblivion that of a noble Roman, Plautius Lateranus, upon the site of whose house Constantine built the residence of Sylvestro and the adjoining church.

† Sacrosanta Lateraneusis Ecclesia, omnium urbis et orbis ecclesiarum mater et caput.

guide '*la prima chiesa del mondo.*' But Rome had seen christian churches before the time of Constantine, for his predecessors had occasionally, as it suited their politics or caprice, granted permission to the christians, already a numerous and influential sect, openly to perform the ceremonies of their faith; and during these fitful snatches of toleration many small christian temples were erected, which might, did they still exist, dispute the palm of precedence with the splendid Basilica Constantina. Santa Maria, in Trastevere, still exists, which is said to occupy the site of the Taberna Meritoria, used with the permission of Septimus Severus as a place of worship by the christians, during a short respite from persecution. Then there were the churches established by the Apostles and their disciples in the east; but Rome, all-ruling Rome, was the only point from which the light of the true religion could irradiate with commanding advantage; and until the great city became its centre, under a converted Emperor, its progress had been slow, difficult, and perilous, and its struggles might be best marked upon the page of history, by a streak of blood.

The sudden conversion of Constantine shed a new and unexpected gleam of prosperity over the destinies of the meek and lowly followers of Christ; and one of the first acts of imperial zeal was the erection of a splendid Basilica*, worthy of the faith he now professed. It was raised near the spot where he had been baptized by St. Sylvester, the chief Priest or Pope of the christians; a dangerous post, which had been filled since the crucifixion of Peter, under Nero, by an uninterrupted line of martyrs. This 'first church' arose with all the splendour that the spoils of the richest buildings of Rome could afford; and though the arts of sculpture and painting had already departed†, and architecture was fast sinking, yet, by selecting the most superb columns and the richest decorations of the ancient public buildings—by appropriating the rarest marbles, gems, and a profusion of bronzes, and of gold and silver, and piling them together in the best imitation of the wonderful works of the Augustan and Trajean ages, which still existed in all their beauty—a building was produced which well merited its title of Aurea. And here, upon this spot, in the year 324 of the christian era, when the painted savages of the isles of Britain were still practising the cruel rites of Druidic fanaticism, christian worship was nobly and peacefully performed under the sanction

* The christians abhorred even the forms of the pagan temples, and adopting the form of the Basilica (Courts of Law) for the model of their places of worship, they acquired the name Basilica.

† The state of sculpture at that period may be easily appreciated by a reference to the statue of Constantine still preserved in the church—a wretched work, whose miserable execution vouches for it being the genuine work of a contemporary artist.

and protection of a christian government; and here, was that mild religion first preached, which was to humanize and save a savage world. Constantine caused his splendid work to be dedicated to the Saviour; but as corruptions and misconceptions crept into the church with her prosperity, the etiquette of the seventh century required that it should likewise be placed under the protection of a Saint. St. John the Baptist was the chosen patron, and the name of the Redeemer has disappeared before that of his humble predecessor.

The superb edifice raised by Constantine existed nearly 1000 years, spared in the fall and degradation of Rome, by the gothic hordes of Alaric and Totilla, to create a power, destined, even from the gates of that Rome which they had trampled into ruins, to rule their posterity with a spell more potent than that of the long invincible legions which they had at length vanquished. In 1308, during the temporary residence of the Popes at Avignon, the building was accidentally destroyed by fire, and with it the old palace of the Lateran, where councils had been held, and whence decrees had been issued upon which the existence and extension of the christian religion long depended, and where eventually was woven that vast web of power which the papacy at length cast over Europe; urging its warlike nations to deeds, which, as they fade into the more distant dimness of the past, will appear more wild and fabulous than the darkest legends of the ancient world.

Clement V. immediately dispatched agents to Rome, to re-establish the venerated pile; nothing having escaped the destruction of the flames, but a small chapel, now called the 'Sanctum Sanctorum,' of that church, from which the christian faith had already spread over all civilized Europe. The new building occupied the precise form and situation of the original, with the exception of an addition of a transverse aisle, to effect the cruciform plan which was then deemed essential in the design of a church. But, under the directions of the architects of the period, gothic arches met in their fanciful and fretted groinnings above the ancient Corinthian columns which were still left standing: yet, incongruous as this mixture of the Gothic and Grecian styles may appear, it did not perhaps produce a disagreeable effect; for the gothic of Italy was not exactly like that of the north; a shade of the antique was still preserved in its minor ornaments, and in the almost classical capitals of its slender and often twisted columns. It had, too, something of the Moresque or Saracenic in its lightness, which would accord much better with the taper proportions of a Corinthian column, than the deeper and more massive gothic of northern Europe; and I can conceive that, with the splendid additions of painting, gilding, sculpture, and drapery, of which the

Romish church already well understood the effect, that it must have been an impressive building, as indeed are all gothic cathedrals of that age. It is now gothic no more. In the reign of Innocent X. it had become in part ruinous; and the columns of the nave were deemed too slender for the support of the roof: or rather, let it be acknowledged at once, that the rage for modernisation was then at the height of its career of destruction. The beauties of the Greek and Roman architecture had, after the long slumber of art in the dark ages, been appreciated in its beautiful ruins; and its imitation eventually became a rage. Towards the middle and end of the sixteenth century, not a gothic church in Rome could be left to repose in the rich twilight of its painted windows, that had so long shed their "dim religious light" over the monuments and relics of the earliest ages of the faith. And as Walpole says, they began "building the modern churches of Rome with the money extracted from the devotion inspired by her gothic ones." San Giovanni Laterano shared the fate of the rest; its pointed windows and groined roof were abominations no longer to be tolerated, and to aid the general metamorphosis, even the noble columns, almost the only relics of the original building, were concealed in encasements of stucco pilasters, from which spring the semicircular arches of its present roof. But Borromino, under whose directions the alterations were effected, has, though his work has destroyed a thousand of the deepest associations of the spot, produced a noble architectural ensemble. In each mass of his encasements he has preserved a deep and lofty niche, in which now stands the colossal statue of an apostle; and the perspective effect from the grand entrance is very fine. Indeed, this series of gigantic statues, the works of some of the greatest sculptors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is one of the wonders of Rome. Well might Roubillac express his astonishment at the colossal works of Bernini and other Italian sculptors, when he saw this stupendous avenue of statuary. I think it is Hazlitt who relates of him, that upon his return to London, he hastened to Westminster Abbey to compare the impressions he had received in Italy with his own celebrated works, but that he soon rushed out of the building, exclaiming "Egad, sir, they looked like tobacco pipes!!"

The principal altar is the one erected at the rebuilding by Clement V., and is almost the only morceau of gothic remaining, producing a *bizarre*, though not disagreeable, effect. It stands in the centre of the cross formed by the intersection of the transverse aisle, and is a sort of lofty pavilion covered with painting, gilding, and mosaic; in the upper part of which are urns of silver, said to contain the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul. Many alterations and additions have been made,

at various periods, by various Pontiffs, but none have changed the position of the ancient basilica ; so that although it can scarcely be called the first church, yet it covers the same piece of ground : and one must be callous indeed to the softer and venerated emotions of the heart, not to feel a solemn influence creep over the mind, as we stand upon the spot whence the faith in which we take so deep an interest first emanated. This is indeed ‘the rock’ foretold to Peter, upon which he founded his church, and where the sandals might be taken from the feet in reverence ; for we stand upon holy ground.

Had I lived in the time of Luther, I confess I should have had my scruples in dissenting from the church of Rome, despite of its abuses and corruptions ; and even now I can scarcely help regretting that, as a Protestant, I have no right to kneel at this venerable shrine, and felt hurt when the old priest observed that, as a Lutheran, I could feel but little interest in what he was describing to me. I defended myself from this aspersion so warmly, that I believe the old man formed, at the moment, some hopes of my permanent conversion.

From my theological discussion I was aroused by a long description which a young attendant was measuring out to me of the bronze columns of Augustus, which decorate the altar of the Absis, at the top of the great nave. This altar was put together by the architect Paolo Olivieri, who employed in its construction four very beautiful antique columns of the green marble called Serpentino, which the digging of some foundation had suddenly brought to light from the buried wreck of the ancient city ; and also, the celebrated columns of fluted bronze discovered in an accidental excavation at the Capitoline hill, which are proved, beyond a doubt, to be those cast, by order of the Emperor Augustus, from the ‘*spolia opima*’ taken at Actium, and originally placed in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.

How far these trophies of pagan warfare are in keeping with the altar of a Christian church, is a question I will not attempt to decide. Indeed, it is a fastidious reflection for an Englishman, accustomed, as he has been, to see the shot-torn trophies of war fluttering to the peal of the organ in the dome of St. Paul’s ; or the banners of the knights, with their emblems of blood, suspended in rich array in the royal chapel of Windsor. To return :—The soffit above the altar is occupied by a fine mosaic, exhibiting figures of colossal dimensions executed, in part by Gaddo Gaddi, a Florentine, about the year 1290, in a simpler and more noble taste than many efforts of the arts at that period. A more curious specimen of this art is preserved in a sort of tribune built for the purpose, outside the

church; it formed part of the decorations of the original basilica, and was executed by order of Honorius, a short time previous to the final fall of Rome. To the curious in the history of art, it is an interesting specimen of the works of an epoch when mosaic was the only branch of those fine arts once carried to so high a pitch in Rome, that still breathed amid the troubles of that dark and eventful time. It was one of the small portions of the primeval church that escaped the conflagration, and the image of the Saviour, which it contains, is affirmed by popular tradition to be more ancient than the rest of the work, and to have been executed at the time of the original consecration of the church, and consequently is held in the greatest veneration by the people of Rome. Even for a stranger, there is an indescribable charm about these earliest relics of the church, in comparison to which our most venerable cathedrals appear but modern constructions of yesterday, that involuntarily draw forth feelings of awe and veneration which he cannot control.

Adjoining the church I was introduced to what my guide termed the cloister of Constantine, *il chiostro di Costantino*, but its style at once proclaims it a work of the fourteenth century, most probably an addition made at the rebuilding of the church in 1308, for many beautiful portions of friezes, and other portions of sculpture of antique workmanship, appear in its construction; remains, most likely, of the adjoining palace, which Constantine prepared for the residence of the bishops of Rome when he built the church. This picturesque gothic cloister I found quite refreshing after the classical flourishes of Borromino; and, lulled by the gently dripping fountain that rose, shaded by orange trees, in the centre of the court, I could have spent many hours in the indulgence of the meditations to which the locality gives rise. But this remnant, too, will I fear soon find a Borromino; and unless the spirit now so rife in the north for the discovery and preservation of the quaint and original works of the middle ages, travels south in time to save, some modernising, but sacrilegious touch, will destroy its interest for ever.

Here are preserved many interesting relics, brought at various periods from the holy land; some by Constantine himself, and some by his more devout mother, the canonized St. Helena. These, at least, may be considered genuine; for at the time of their removal to Rome, scarcely three centuries had elapsed since the events they illustrate took place. Others are the offerings of the crusaders of later times, which are almost all that the nations of Europe have to show for the enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure made by their ancestors in those fanatic

expeditions. Among this collection are two columns, evidently of Syrian workmanship, said to have formed the entrance to the house of Pilate. Another column, elaborately carved in a similar style, and most singularly divided, as by a single blow, from summit to base, is venerated as one of the phenomena which took place when that awful and unnatural darkness occurred at noon-day, and the vail of the Temple was rent in twain.

There is also the mouth of a well, in one piece of marble, said to be the one at which passed the scene of the woman of Samaria. It is evidently of eastern and very ancient sculpture; and, as the deep furrows worn in the side by frequently descending ropes sufficiently attest that for ages it must have served as the mouth of some much frequented well, there is no good reason to doubt but that it may have belonged to the one in question. Its removal to Rome is well attested; and as the Jews, even after the last final catastrophe, took very little interest in the stupendous events which had occurred in their land, and were not at all likely to remove objects which had received no additional value in their eyes from the scenes which had passed in their precincts, it is easy to believe that such things would remain undisturbed; and when Syria formed an integral part of the well-governed and well-cemented Roman empire, in the time of Constantine, nothing would have been more easy to him, in the newness of his zeal, than to remove to Rome any object illustrative of the sacred history, which the Christians of the churches of Asia Minor would not fail to point out to him. If the obelisks, and other objects of Egyptian art much more difficult of transport, which his predecessors carried to Rome, are not disputed or deemed spurious, why should these Syrian monuments, which bear internal evidences of their origin fully as strong and undeniable*?

I have been led into this digression from witnessing the unreasonable and absurd incredulity with which most of my countrymen affect to consider relics of this description; and from feeling that the temporary gratification of playing the *esprit fort*, by no means compensates for the loss of the many delightful sensations and speculations which it entails. I am not disposed to the adoration of relics, but I cannot but feel a deep interest in remains that carry the imagination

* It is quite certain, however, even in the early ages of the church, long before more recent and notorious abuses, that the legitimate influence of relics was abused by vulgar superstitions, of which an apt illustration presents itself in the well-known legend of the church of San Giacomo scopa cavallo:—A number of relics, imported by the zealous mother of Constantine, on their road from the boats of the Tiber to the Lateran Basilica, were impeded in their progress by a kicking horse, which absolutely refusing to proceed with his load, the circumstance was deemed a miraculous interference, and a church for their reception built upon the spot thus supernaturally indicated.

back so vividly to an age of miracles ; and I feel persuaded that their contemplation might tend to fix the faith of many a wavering christian.

All too is venerable that belongs to the past, even though no stupendous dispensation, nor even poetic legend, nor historic fact, be attached to its associations. A sculptured fragment, the purpose, name, or period of which are unknown, is venerable, as the work and monument of hands that have passed away and are dust.

The contemplation of such things reminds us that our own time will soon, by new generations, be called 'the past;' and a noble ambition arises in the breast, with a longing to do something that may not be forgotten ; and makes us share the noble fear of Dante, when he exclaims

" Temo di perder vita tra coloro,
Che questo tempo chiameranno antico."

A stranger can scarcely take a step in Rome without catching a glimpse of some object of sufficient interest to tempt him from his path. My intended route on leaving San Giovanni, the church's foundation stone, was direct to *San Paolo fuori delle mura* ; but I was first attracted to the building containing the *scala santa*, a set of marble stairs said to have been brought from the house of the Prætor of Jerusalem, and which popular belief supposes Christ himself to have trodden. Here may be seen repentant sinners ascending the sacred steps on their knees in penance, and descending the lateral stairs provided for the purpose, to return to the task again and again, of ascending the central steps of marble, which are the sacred ones, on their already bruised and bleeding knees ; indeed none have ever profaned them by ascending in an erect position ; and Luther himself confesses having performed the penance in a true spirit of devotion, ere his apostacy tempted him to sneer at the faith of his youth*. The next object that detains the wanderer near this spot, is the baptistry of Constantine ; a handsome octagonal building, covering the spot where the imperial convert received the sacrament of baptism. Its columns of porphyry are still perfect ; and its form and architectural arrangements remaining nearly in the original state, make it one of the most interesting monuments in Rome.

To reach the Ostian way by the Porta San Paolo, I traversed a great portion of the deserted part of Rome ; over waste land and half-cultivated vineyards, where

* These steps of marble being found unable to resist the persevering piety of the devout Romans, and one of the most celebrated relics being thus in danger of total annihilation by their wear and tear, have been protected by a wooden casing, which, however, is removed on great fête-days, to allow to pious knees the superior advantages of the marble.

the glittering lizard ran nimbly over the rarely trodden path, and snakes, showing their brilliant hues in the bright sunshine, lay coiled upon the warm stones of fallen ruins. The stupendous remains of the Baths of Caracalla I left on my right, and eventually reached the Ostian gate; from whence, as recently as the tenth century, a portico covered with lead, and supported on columns of marble, stretched away to the very doors of the great church of St. Paul, to protect the crowd of devotees that daily flocked to that celebrated shrine, from the inconveniences of sun and dust; but no such convenience remained for me; and the scorching rays of an Italian mid-day sun served to *warm* my enthusiasm, as I toiled along the burning road which now passes at the back, instead of, as formerly, the front of the Basilica. I stood before the ruins of *S. Paolo fuore delle mura*, which, previous to its partial destruction by fire in 1823, was the finest, or, at all events, the most interesting ancient christian Basilica in the world. Upon the site of a little oratory, raised (according to the Catholic legend) by *St. Anacleto* over the spot where St. Paul earned the glories of martyrdom, Constantine, at the instigation of his converter, Sylvestro, caused a church, dedicated to the great apostle of the Gentiles, to be erected; which was consecrated in 324 by Sylvestro soon after he had performed a similar office for the church of the Lateran. It was enlarged by Theodosius and Valentinian, whose additions, with other enrichments, were carried to completion under Honorius, in 395. It was again repaired and embellished by the unfortunate Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius the younger, whose vicissitudes as wife of the debauched Valentinian III., of his murderer and successor Maximus, and as a captive of the Vandal Genseric, who carried her away prisoner, as portion of his pillage of Rome in 455, forms an episode as interesting in the dark records of the time, as the more varied adventures of her mother-in-law Placidia.* Previous to the destructive visit of Genseric, the city had in some degree recovered from the shock of the devastation of Alaric; and Eudoxia, the empress-wife of an inactive voluptuary, was occupying her religious zeal by pulling down such of the remaining public edifices as were constructed with valuable or highly-wrought materials, to embellish the churches; and since the final abolition of paganism by Theodosius, A.D. 388, the closed temples and stripped statues afforded ample supply of columns and saints for her purpose.

* This was a period when indeed "truth was stranger than fiction." The barbarian brother of Alaric, rushing from his savage wilds into the midst of civilization and splendour, beyond what his wildest fancy could conceive, carried off, a willing bride, Placidia, the accomplished daughter of the great Theodosius.

The last struggles of the advocates of the pagan religion remind us forcibly of the political discussions of our own time; and the arguments for and against conservation on one side, and innovation on the other, might be translated without alteration from the musty manuscripts of Symmachus and Prudentius, to the columns of a modern newspaper, as the report of a parliamentary debate of our own times. Symmachus, the eloquent advocate of the family of Jupiter, exclaims, "I am born free! allow me to enjoy my ancient and domestic institutions; they have reduced the world under our laws. They have repelled Hannibal from the city, and the Gauls from the Capitol. Were my grey hairs reserved for this intolerable disgrace?—I am ignorant of this new system that I am required to adopt; but I am well assured," &c. &c. &c.—A learned gentleman, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, replies—demanding, "Why is it necessary to introduce an imaginary and invisible power, as the cause of those victories which are sufficiently explained by the valour and discipline of the legions?" &c. &c.

But the ruins of St. Paolo recal me from the continuation of the discussion. Among the decorations that may be referred to the period of Eudoxia and the great Pontiff Leo, who then so ably governed the church, were the series of portraits of the first Popes, painted by order of Leo, from St. Peter to his own time; and this most interesting record of the efforts of art in the fifth century existed in good preservation till the ever-to-be-regretted fire of 1823. A curious specimen of art of a somewhat earlier period, however, still remains; viz., an elaborate mosaic of the time of Honorius, with the verses of its inscription still freshly shining in letters of gold upon a purple ground.

"Theodosius cepit, perfecit Honorius Aulam
Doctoris mundi, sacratum corpore Pauli."

Until the recent fire, the edifice of Constantine, as enlarged by Theodosius and Honorius, remained complete in all its parts; and though almost completely encased in a shell of mosaics, pictures, and barbarous architectural additions of the early ages, and the more splendid ones of a later period, was still the original building; and christian worship had been uninterruptedly and regularly performed within its primitive walls for fifteen hundred years. It formed an illustrative and vivid record of the advance of religion and the arts, from the fourth to the nineteenth century. It was a place to arouse the most lethargic to thought and speculation; and carrying the imagination over that expanse of ages, served to re-animate and put in living action, historic images, which in

many are suffered to lie dormant, after the years of youthful study, unless aroused by the powerful associations of such a scene as this.

There was still that wondrous avenue of gigantic columns of Parian marble, torn from the Pagan tomb of Hadrian, which in themselves were sufficient for a monument of the boundless power of Rome in her greatness; of which she had lost but little in the days of Constantine, who transported the vast shafts of marble to their final destination: one felt himself in a Roman temple, though a Christian church. There were (and there still exist) the mosaics of Honorius, symbols of Roman art, struggling, even in the extinction of her power, to make a last effort in honour of the new and true religion. There was the Gothic pavilion, and its twisted columns surmounted by a feeble imitation, or rather reminiscence, of the Corinthian capital; with sarcophagi of Vandal forms incrusting with Roman mosaics, displaying in every fanciful emblazonment, the figure of the cross; combinations that carried forward the imagination to the period when the barbarian having laid prostrate the giant power of Rome, adopted her religion, and caught, to mingle with the wild fancies of the north, the last sparks of her expiring arts. Then came a picture of the growing power of an already ambitious church, and its influence on the passions of man in the darkest of the dark ages; exhibited in the rich and effigied tombs of the early bishops, who in this marble sleep lay proudly beside the less ostentatious monuments of princes and warriors, whose hands, clasped in prayer, and legs crossed, (the privilege of a crusader) proclaim them but the vassals and slaves of the church. What images arise and float across the busy regions of an excited mind, when such a scene reproduces, as it were in a mirror, those strange ages of war and prayer, of vain glory and virtue, of crime and devotion!

The panorama advances. In the elegant yet fanciful ornaments of an additional Capella of some cardinal or noble, might be recognised, in the graceful form of its highly ornamental sarcophagus, with some quotation from a long forgotten Greek or Roman author upon its tablet, a monument of the revival of the arts; and one might picture to himself the delight of the freshly learned, in the discovery, day after day, of new treasures of the long lost poetry and philosophy of a state of civilization that had passed away; and the enthusiasm of the artist with eyes newly awakened to the beauties of the still remaining specimens of ancient art.

Next come the more gorgeous and massive, but perhaps less quaint or pleasing monuments of an age nearer our own: the papacy still ruling with despotic sway; but the fierce warriors of the crusade, reduced to luxurious, yet bigoted

nobles, who crowding her temples with gorgeous gifts and decorations, thus propitiated at once a tyrannical church and a troubled conscience. These splendid monuments portrayed alike the wealth, the taste, and the bigotry of the age in which they were erected. It was the Augustan, or rather Leonian age of modern Italy, and extended from the time of Leo X. to nearly a century later.

Thus following the embodied history of art preserved in the monuments of the basilica of St. Paul, one might have continued through the three remaining centuries to the present era; but it was a dream, and the vision has vanished:—the basilica of St. Paul is now a heap of ruins!

It is said that it is to be restored, and strong appeals have been made to the Roman Catholic world. Columns of black and white granite, from quarries accidentally laid bare in the Simplon, by the gigantic work of Napoleon, are to replace those that Trajan had transported from Greece, and that Constantine tore from his tomb to erect in a christian church.

But who shall restore that crowd of monuments, with their associations and illustrations of the past? None but the poet!

The convicts of Gregorio XIV. who are lazily wandering with their half-filled wheel-barrows over the wreck, will apparently be many years, at their present rate of work, in clearing the ruins; and before the architect can fairly commence this task, who can foresee what event may not impede his progress? for if it be true that “coming events cast their shadows before,” there is indeed a dark horizon of change and revolution before us, which may for ever prevent the rebuilding of the temple; or even sweep its pure religion from the earth; and then, as Chateaubriand emphatically asks—“*Quelle religion succedera au christianisme sur la terre?*”

To return to the churches of Rome. A large proportion of the three hundred are modern, that is, modern for Rome, where three hundred years is a yesterday in the age of her venerable shrines; and such as possess no stronger claims to antiquity, would, in very few instances, reward the trouble of description; they are, however, generally good specimens of the style of architecture of their respective dates. Their interiors glow with every brilliant hue that can be obtained from the marble quarry, and are relieved with a profusion of painting and gilding—not, however, always in the best taste. They are generally built in the form of either a Latin or Greek cross, with a dome over the intersection of the nave and transverse aisles; for after Bramante, emulating Brunelleschi’s effort at Florence, had so splendidly worked out the idea of a dome in his plan for St. Peter’s, domes became the rage, and no design for modernising or building a

church was deemed complete without one; insomuch that many were completed in Rome ere the gigantic mass of St. Peter's had reached its great cornice. One of the finest of these, but which nevertheless conveys a fair average idea of all the rest, is that belonging to the splendid church of the Jesuits—a worthy monument of the high and palmy days of the fallen order. The whole interior of this church is one glittering mass of painting, sculpture, and gilding, the hue of gold predominating, and producing the most sumptuous effect among its forest of marble columns. It is for its size one of the richest churches in Rome.

But I must attempt more particularly to describe one other Roman church, that of Santa Maria Maggiore. This is, perhaps, the most elegant temple in the papal city, and still preserves unchanged its original basilican form, and consequently a true claim to its title of Basilica, so corruptly applied in most other instances. Its three naves are marked and divided by thirty-six superb antique columns of Greek marble, the shaft of each consisting of a single and entire block. The pavilion, which is a papal altar, is similar to that of St. Peter's, upon a smaller scale. The ceiling, the superb design of San Gallo, is flat, but sunk into deep and elaborate compartments, enriched with painting and a profusion of gilding, for which latter purpose a Columbus discovered a new world, and a new Ophir furnished the gold; the precious metal employed being the first sample brought to Europe by the great Genoese, and presented as a worthy offering, by Ferdinand and Isabella, to Alexander VI. There is a series of very ancient and interesting mosaic pictures here, but the objects which must strike an observer above every other in the edifice, are the Paolina and Sistina chapels; named after the same respective Popes, as the more celebrated ones in the Vatican,* Sisto V., and Paolo V., the first the celebrated Peretti, the last the great Borghesi, the founder of a family which has no rival in rank in Italy.

The Sistina, erected in 1586 from the designs of Domenico Fontana, with its enrichments of Grecian marble, stucchi, alti relievi, gilding, bronzes, paintings, and the magnificent tomb of its founder, presents a mass of splendour which one would conceive impossible to surpass in a similar space, till we turn to the corresponding chapel on the other side of the church, the Paolina, or Borghesiana, as it has been also termed; the form and size of which are the same as those of its rival, namely, a compressed Greek cross, of about 20 feet from extreme to

* There can be no comparison instituted between the celebrated chapels of the Vatican and those of Santa Maria Maggiore, the former being of considerable size, and erected for the purpose of the exclusive devotions and splendid *fonzione* of the reigning Pope; while the latter are but chapels erected over family vaults, for the celebration of masses for the dead.

extreme each way, surmounted by a dome over the intersection; but here the parallel must cease; for, as in the Vatican, the Sistina immeasurably surpasses the Paolina, where the work of Sistus, aided by the mighty hand of Michael Angelo, defied approach; so the struggle for superior splendour in Santa Maria Maggiore, where the talents employed were more equal, is decided beyond comparison in favour of the wealth of Borghesi. The splendid gates thrown open, disclose on the right the monument of Clement VIII. (Aldobrandini), and on the opposite side, that of the founder; whilst in front, Rainaldi has reared his noblest work, the superb altar. But to describe in detail this wonderful chapel, whose principal architect was Flaminio Ponzio, in 1611, is impossible; it is one elaborate mass of beautiful works of art. Not a spot but is occupied by a rich basso relievo, a tablet of rare and elaborately inlaid marble, a deep niche with its projecting statue, or the division of a compartment by an embossed border of gilded bronze; and in the divisions of the dome, the decorations which are not from the magic pencil itself of Guido Reni, are mosaics from the designs of that great master, or Algardi.

The architect has not had here to study how he might produce the greatest effect with the least labour and expense; but how to pile together and combine a mass of the most beautiful and elaborate works of the greatest artists of the age, with the richest materials that the quarry and the mine could yield to the wealth of the church, in such a manner as to give the repose necessary to produce that unity of effect, without which the work would have been all fitter and gaud. To avoid that disagreeable result would seem impossible in such a combination, and yet he has succeeded. The light is admitted but from one point, the cupoletta which surmounts the dome; and by strongly projecting cornices, by deep niches, and by a happy juxtaposition of colours, he has preserved that unity and that simplicity of effect, which few attain, even when unincumbered by overwrought materials.*

* I am induced here once again to remark upon criticisms on art, volunteered by those who, artistically speaking, have but slight means of judging. Lady Blessington, speaking of the celebrated capella de' Depositi at Florence, says—"The walls of the chapel are encrusted with marbles of every hue, and their diversity reminds one of a patchwork quilt, or a tailor's book of patterns." I agree to the bad effect of the Florentine chapel, but cannot attribute the failure to the coloured marbles, which are all of dark and sombre hue; and one of its greatest defects is want of *variety*, both in light, shade, and colour. Her ladyship would evidently disapprove of these chapels of Santa Maria Maggiore; and perhaps upon the same principle would be for whitewashing St. Peter's, like Symond. A few similar remarks are the only *idle* portion of the truly delightful "Idler in Italy." In painting or sculpture, poetic, or even flippant criticism, like the above allusion to the tailor's pattern card, may be used to display the talent and fancy of an author, but in architecture, artistic knowledge is absolutely requisite. Witness the following passage upon the cathedral of Florence:—"the architecture of this church is different from that of all the others at Florence, and is neither *Greek* nor *Gothic*; *connoisseurs* affirm it to be *ROMAN*, and to them will I leave the task of demonstration."

These two capelli are, in short, masterpieces of the union of luxury and art ; and form splendid illustrations of what may be produced by polychromic effects in interior architecture. Not a spot but blazes with lapis lazuli, gold, or the richer beauties of painting and sculpture ; and yet all is full of noble repose and harmony ; but harmony and repose of a very different character, certainly, from the naked repose and harmony of stone or whitewashed walls.

The splendid alti-relievi which adorn these chapels are the finest I have ever seen, the produce of modern art ; and the only ones I could ever compare with the wonderful works of the ancients in this department of sculpture. The moderns may in a few rare instances have rivalled even the Greeks in the perfection of a detached statue ; but in this department, the Grecian depth of effect, and variety of composition and execution, I have never seen approached, unless in the highly-wrought specimens of which I am speaking : the beautiful works of Stefano Maderno, Buonvicino, Bugio, Vasoldo, and Francesco Stati ; some of the most accomplished artists of that age, who threw all their energies into the rich stock which was to compose the monument at once of their profuse patron and themselves. These most consummate productions of the chisel, represent conclaves, councils, excommunications, benedictions, and other passages of papal story, and for the beauty and elaborate finish of the historic costumes, the high character and expressions of the heads, and their bold and well-studied relief, exceed any works in this department which I have ever seen. In short, these two chapels of St. Maria Maggiore are to me, two of the wonders of Rome.

All the principal Roman families have their chapel in one or other of the churches, but none approach either of these in magnificence ; although, in the opinion of some, that of the Corsini, erected by Clement XII., about 1745, in St. Giovanni Laterano, is a more perfect composition. But with all its elegance of style, and correctness of proportion, so much studied by its architect Galelei, it fails to produce that impression of magnificence and repose combined, which all must experience who for the first time look upon the capella Borghesiana ; and to me the Corsini chapel appears but a tamed down copy of its rivals ; and cannot bear a comparison with the more gorgeous works of the earlier period.

There are several beautiful depository chapels also, in the Santa Maria del Popolo, and at St. Maria sopra Minerva ; the latter is almost the only gothic church of Rome which has been allowed by modern improvers to retain any of its original form. But its principal attractions are the tombs of many celebrated characters of the fifteenth century, and the beauty of some of the monuments ;

which are of surprisingly original and graceful design, in that cinquecenti taste, which contrived to seize all the grace of Grecian art, and to combine it with the quaintness and originality of the works of the 13th and 14th centuries. Here also is Michael Angelo's famous Christ, one of the statues I alluded to, when speaking of modern rivalry with ancient art; the sublime expression of which has created such devotion among Roman pilgrims, that the foot, which slightly projects beyond the pedestal, is now encased in a brazen sheath, to protect it from the kisses which had nearly worn away the toe; but the protection appears ineffectual, unless continually renewed, for it is already polished as bright as a mirror, and wearing through at the point; so that the continual pressure of soft lips, like the dropping of soft water, will, it seems, make an impression on the hardest stone.

In England, speaking of a place without an old gothic church, appears like saying there is no antiquity to be met with; but in Rome it is works long anterior to that period which alone are called ancient. Such are numerous; and, while the comparatively modern works of the gothic era have been altered or destroyed, *they* still remain; many of them nearly in their original condition; and a chronological list of specimens might be cited from the fourth to the tenth century; materially changed in the course of the repairs of fifteen hundred years, but most of the original features retaining their primitive character and interest. To mention a few of these, I would name Santa Agnese, Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Santa Maria in Trastevere, Santa Cecilia, and, though only transformed into a church in the 16th century, upon the plan of Michael Angelo, that of Santa Maria degl Angeoli; originally the great hall of the Baths of Diocletian, whose stupendous columns of granite still occupy their original positions;—but I have already devoted more time to my notice upon churches than I intended, and must sum up the result of my wanderings among the 300, in a few general observations.

I passed many agreeable days in rambling through the most ancient, seeking with the greatest interest such as contained well-preserved remains of original Roman construction. San Pietro in Vincolo is said to occupy the site of a small oratory, erected by St. Peter himself. It was rebuilt by Pope Leo the Great, in 442, with such materials as the Roman temples, ruined by the incursions of barbarians of various nations, and crumbling through the neglect and compulsory desertion of their votaries, afforded in abundance.

The fine Grecian Doric columns of Parian marble then erected, still remain; but they are all that is left of the edifice of Leo. The ceiling is comparatively



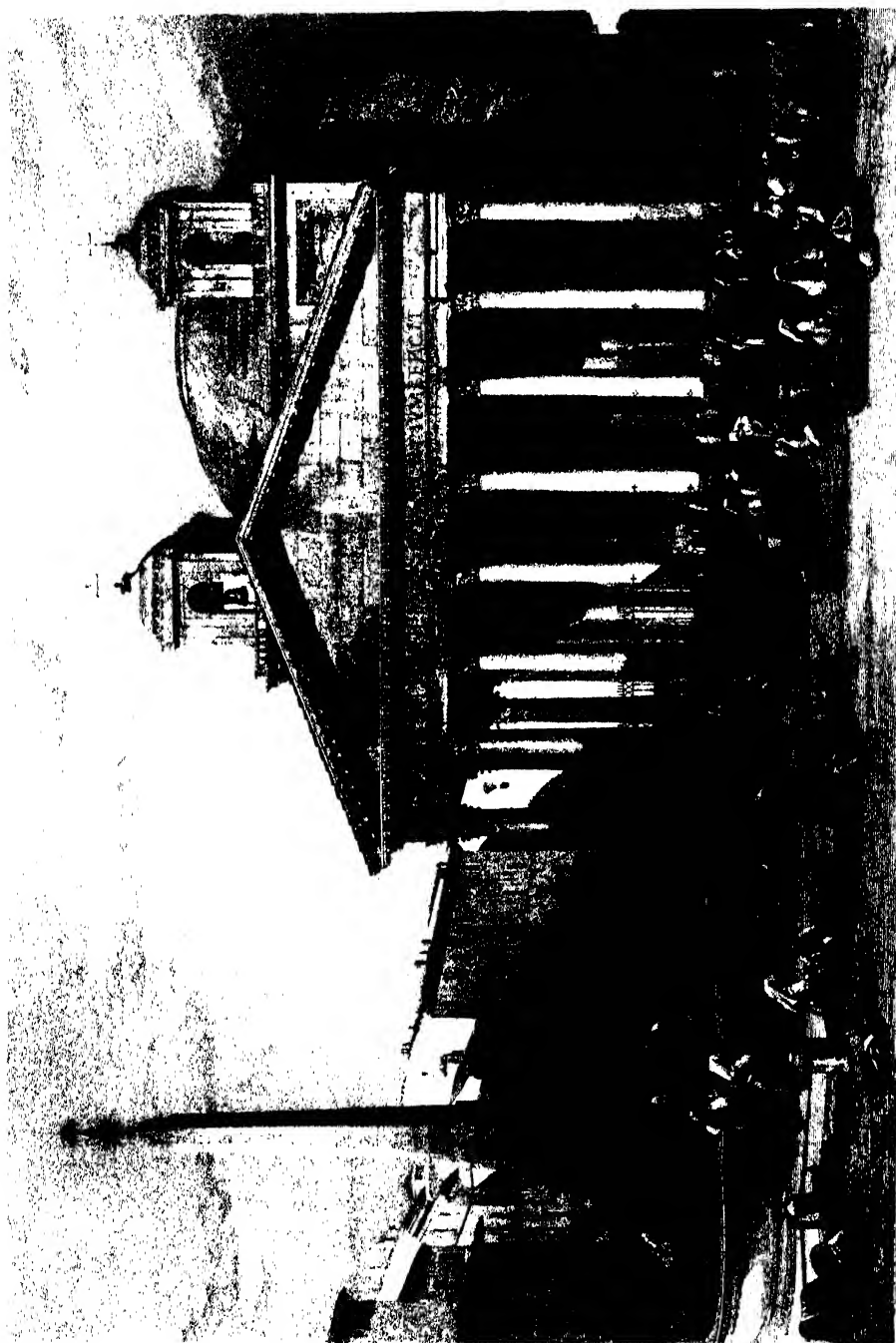
modern, and the walls present no traces of antiquity. But here is the tomb of Giulio II., who made more concessions to Michael Angelo, to induce him to work at this mausoleum, than he would have done to a sovereign prince to obtain a great political advantage. Yet, after all, it is a failure; Buonarotti's genius does not seem to have taken kindly to the work. The figure of Moses, from the master's own chisel, is superb—one of his most celebrated *capo d'opere*; but the rest is very inferior, and, as a composition, bad. St. Stefano Rotundo is, perhaps, one of the ancient churches of Rome which possesses most of its original form. The mass is undoubtedly antique; though it is probably not that of the Temple of Claudius, as has been asserted. Its conversion to a church, either by rebuilding or alteration, is most likely of the date of Pope Simplicio, whose dedication of it is recorded in 468; while architecture still possessed something of the antique character, particularly when materials of the great eras of Roman art were supplied from structures then in existence. This singular church is of a circular form, favouring the idea of its being built upon the remains of a temple. The circular nave, sustained by fifty-eight columns of granite, has a fine effect; but their capitals and bases, though pretending to be of the Ionic order, are of barbarous execution; while the Corinthian columns, of greater height, which support the centre—a species of flattened dome—are of superb workmanship, and, most likely, formed part of the temple upon the ruins of which the church arose. The smaller columns, rising from above the cornice of the granite ones of the circular nave, and supporting the roof, though quite out of the grammar of the art, have a pleasing effect, and form one of the most agreeable characteristics of the Roman architecture of the fourth and fifth centuries; a beautiful specimen of which may be seen in the Baptistery of Constantine, before mentioned.

The walls of St. Stefano are covered with indifferent frescoes, by Nicolo Pomoranico, displaying, in the most horridly disgusting manner, the excruciating sufferings of some of those who endured martyrdom under the early emperors, attended with every ingenuity of torment, from the tearing out of eyes with red-hot pincers, to simmering in scalding oil, with many more mutilations too disgusting to mention; all represented with curious fidelity. It is a singularly interesting exhibition to the Roman devotees (who, on the festa of the patron saint, visit this church in great numbers); for the dates of the martyrdoms, and the names of the emperors, affixed to each picture, give an air of authenticity, which even the miracle-loving Romans can appreciate. Those imperial monsters little dreamed of being thus held up to the execration of posterity in their own

temples ; still less that Rome itself was, in after times, to become the centre of the power of that sect which they were endeavouring to crush by such unheard-of and inhuman cruelties.

But to return to our subject. Some fine remains of early structure are to be found in the Basilica of St. Sebastiano fuori delle Mura, where may be seen splendid Corinthian capitals surmounting columns to which they do not belong, and supporting a frieze of a different order. At Santa Maria in Cosmedin, and Santa Maria in Trastevere, there are also some interesting remains of form and material ; but a few general characteristics will give a better idea of these oldest temples of christianity than any particular description. Of the old churches of Rome only the very oldest remain, as I have said ; for all that were built in the gothic era and style, after the pagan temples and their materials had been all "used up," and the last remains of classic art abandoned, were destroyed or modernised in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For when once the moderns had re-discovered the secret of the perfection of ancient art, it became a sort of mania in Rome ; and so sudden was the transition of taste, that the progress of many half-finished gothic buildings was at once stopped, and they were either entirely rebuilt, or their gothic origin effectually concealed by an encasement of legitimate pilasters, &c. The only gothic remains now to be found in Rome consist in detached morceaux, venerated as the depository of some sacred relic, or from other similar causes.

But the greater number of the earliest churches more than compensate for the absence of specimens of the gothic eras, which I find myself continually regretting ; and they formed for me the most interesting fields of research, if I may dignify the curiosity of a mere amateur by such a term. With their numerous additions, modifications, and accumulations, they form heterogeneous masses, among which an antiquary might hope to pass the remainder of his life as in an appropriate paradise. This may be easily conceived, when it is considered that they were most frequently constructed from the spoils of temples, and other ancient public buildings, wherever an opportunity for spoliation occurred ; so that, unlike works built upon a regular plan, with new materials, their structure generally presents little uniformity of design, and great incongruity of adaptation. A heavy column of white marble stands in the same colonnade with one of giallo-antico, of Corinthian proportions, crushed by a capital of travertine, of heavy Doric ; next in the line appears a twisted column of the age of Constantine, which, too short to reach the architrave, is lengthened by a block of basalt, covered with Egyptian hieroglyphics. Above, you get a semi-gothic frieze of



later date ; and the ceiling, in strong contrast with the stern remains below, finely flourished over by a Lanfranco, or a Pietro di Cortona. As you advance, you observe a pair of statues of plump Roman senators, of a certain age ; one of which, by having a bunch of keys riveted to the crumbling toga, is made to represent St. Peter ; and the other, with a sword affixed to the broken hand, is made to represent the bolder Paul. In the neighbouring chapel you perceive the tomb of a cardinal (stolen from the tombs of the Appian Way), representing a triumph of Bacchus, but properly sanctified to its purpose by a deep *cross*, cut boldly through the fat form of Silenus, and dividing the graceful limbs of half a dozen dancing *bacchante*. The altar, perhaps, is supported (as at St. Giovanni di Laterano) by columns from a temple of Jupiter. On a flat tombstone, the stiff and formal effigy of a monk lies, side by side, with half the divinities of pagantry represented in the piece of mosaic stolen from some heathen monument, with which the tomb is decorated. At a favourite altar, a statue of Venus, with the addition of an embroidered petticoat, represents the Virgin ; whilst the tripod, from a temple of Vesta, serves as the baptismal font. Such are a few of the strange juxtapositions into which things may glide when such a change takes place in the manners or religion of a state, as that which occurred when Constantine, yielding to the eloquence of Sylvestro, embraced the christian faith, and gave it to the Roman world.

I would now, however reluctantly, quit the subject of the Roman churches, but that some few of surpassing interest remain unnoticed ; and at the head of these the celebrated Pantheon. Even the famous Basilica of St. Paul, and its predecessor, San Giovanni Laterano, must yield the precedence to this antique temple—the only edifice of ancient Rome still perfect—still perfect, even to the interior ;—its vaulted roof, with its deep and massive soffittings, still rears its circling canopy high above the ancient floor ; and the stern round aperture, its only window, with unbroken ring, still sheds its glorious mass of light upon the walls below, yet glowing with the vivid hues of their primeval marbles.

As when Agrippa, twenty-seven years before the birth of Christ, dedicated his temple to all the gods, so now the same blue circle of the bright Italian sky hangs above, and the same pavement receives its rays beneath : the temple is still entire : though the whole christian age has elapsed since its erection, there it stands—

“ Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime,
Shrine of all saints, and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus,—spared and bless'd by time.”



unthinking vulgar, to adapt to their own uses some of the splendid ceremonials to which the populace had been so long accustomed. But I was somewhat surprised to find that the dressing up of their statues or images was one of the customs derived from my classic friends the pagans; a fact which I find sufficiently proved by many passages to be met with in the records of the fourth and fifth centuries. Among others, that Serena, the mother-in-law of Honorius, despoiled a statue of Vesta of its splendid *necklace*, which she probably thought would be more becoming to herself.

Similar reflections occurred to me during my visit to the church of Santa Maria in Ara Cœli, built upon the ruins of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the steps of which Cæsar, "the foremost man of all this world," ascended on his knees, on the occasion of his first triumph. A striking reminiscence to one who sees modern Roman penitents toilsomely climbing, in the same manner, the steep and lofty flight of stairs that still leads to the same spot*,—a penance inferior in efficacy only to the ascent of the Scala Santa.

There is still another church, more deeply interesting in its associations than any of the noble piles through which I have wandered with admiration and wonder; a pilgrimage to whose simple shrine no Christian should leave Rome without performing. About a mile from the walls, on the road to Albano, is the Basilica of San Sebastiano, which contains many interesting monuments; but you will not stay to examine them; you will follow your guide through a small door, and descending a deep and narrow staircase by torchlight, pass through gloomy and earthy-smelling galleries, crushing crumbling bones at every step, until at last the monk, who has preceded you, plants his torch in the soft and yielding earth, and in its flickering light a small chapel gradually develops itself. It is a simple cave hollowed in the earthy wall of this subterranean gallery, upon whose simple altar stands an antique marble cross, without polish or ornaments; the first, perhaps, ever carved as an emblem of the sufferings of the followers of Christ. Here, in the catacombs, was the first place where Romans met in Christian worship, and in this loathsome concealment did the early disciples of Peter devote their lives to the worship of the true God; relinquishing even the cheering light of day, for the sake of their faith. Here was at once their church and their tomb, and here might these devoted disciples indeed exclaim, "in the midst of life we are in death." Such was the infancy of the church of Rome; its maturity presents a very opposite picture.

* The steps which Cæsar ascended were most likely on the opposite side of the hill, and branched off from the Via Sacra.

When I had exhausted the most striking sources of interest in the churches, I turned my rambles in the direction of the convents, where I passed away many agreeable days of a soft Italian autumn. The cemetery of the Capucins, with its awful mockery of mortality in the ingenious devices of human bones with which it is decorated, formed a striking contrast to the shady walks of noble Illices, in the gardens of the Camaldolesi, which was one of my favourite retreats. But there was a convent garden commanding views of the Forum and Palatine hill, which was perhaps still more attractive; and another with its solitary palm tree; another with its gigantic cypresses, planted by Michael Angelo, when he converted the neighbouring ruin to a splendid church; another where Tasso dreamed away hours of soft melancholy into sweet poetry, and where the inkstand he used is still shown to the curious in such relics. But I must take my leave of churches and monasteries, not even indulging myself with a recital of a few of the reputed horrors of the *Sepolto vivo**; for though one might wander for months among the ecclesiastical wonders of Rome, discovering daily new matter of interest and curiosity, yet, as the stay of a traveller seldom exceeds, as in my case, an autumn and winter, he must, in the vast and various fields of research contained within the walls of Rome, leave each but partially explored.

* The *Sepolto vivo* is a monastery where refractory or frail nuns are said to be immured in lonely cells, where they never again behold the human form, or the light of day; and when no longer able to take the food lowered to them through a slide—die.



Fig. 1. - View of the building.

CHAPTER IV.

A RAMBLE TO TIVOLI, FRASCATI, ALBANO, &c.

AFTER my wanderings within the walls of old and venerable churches or crumbling cloisters, whose silent aisles and fading monuments fail not eventually to cast a tinge of their own melancholy on the most buoyant spirit, I prefer roaming through the free air of the campagna, and noting down my impressions of the wild hills of Tivoli, to proceeding immediately to the ruins of the Forum, as I had intended.

I quitted Rome one brilliant morning provided only with a cane, to the end of which was attached a small silk net, for the capture of some of the glittering butterflies that flutter in such numbers over the flowers of that beautiful waste, a box of sandwiches, and a small flask of wine. On this side of Rome the campagna presents an air of cultivation near the gates, and cornfields and vineyards, for some distance, border the road ; but I felt more free, and my step seemed to gain elasticity, as I left all traces of industry, and gradually gained the open plain—the wide and green campagna, profusely gemmed with its brightly coloured flowers. But it is most beautiful in early spring, when the scarlet cyclamen and snowy daisy mingle with the green, and thousands of the Apennine anemone embroider its surface ; yet even now it was carpeted with the blushing petals of an endless variety of flowers, many of which were familiar acquaintances of our gardens*. All was sparkling in the moistness of the morning, and a rising sun shot its long rays athwart its flowery expanse, changing to many-coloured gems each single drop that glittered upon the wiry blades of its short herbage.

All was silent as I advanced : the carolling of the larks did not herald in the morn, and it was but rarely that even the guiding bell of a flock of goats turned

* The cliffs at the foot of the hills abound with daphnes, campanulas, and passerinas ; higher up, the woods are brilliant with verbascons, primulas, and orchidaceous plants, many rare and beautiful species of which are found in the marshy portions of the plain ; where in drier places the wild tulip and many species of squill are seen in profusion.

out to browse upon the waste—disturbed the stillness. I pushed forward, braced by the fresh air of the morning, and was seven or eight miles from Rome ere I thought of calculating my distance; so completely had I been occupied by the fresh beauty of the scene, and the dreamy thoughts of other times, which this flowery desert never fails to inspire. As you near the ridge of Apennines, that belt the plain, they assume a thousand rugged and picturesque outlines which distance had softened into flowing curves, and, by degrees, you distinguish upon many of the steepest points, the walls of those ancient towns of Latium, with their historical names, surmounting the very apex of the mountain tops, like mural crowns. Upon an elevated spot on the left, commanding the road, stands a crumbling ruin; a monument, like many others of its class, of the abuses of the feudal system. Here at this *castel Arcione*, a noble Roman family, from whom it took its name, but which is now extinct, levied *toll* upon all passengers between Tivoli and Rome, frequently stripping them to the skin, and otherwise maltreating them; until the den, with its marauding inmates, were at last destroyed by the aroused people of Tivoli, unable longer to support the nuisance*. Soon afterwards I reached the *acque albule*, whose strong sulphureous smell I scented full a mile before reaching them†.

The stream of the *acque albule* proceeds from a group of small lakes, a short distance from the road, whose floating islands, (formed of sulphuric concretions) which move about the surface of the waters at the whim of the wind, are many of them covered with tufts of grass and plants, whose seeds have fallen and germinated there. But they would in reality be scarcely worthy of notice had they not been rendered celebrated in classic verse. The Romans had baths here, and sumptuous remains of their magnificence have been at different times disinterred. The stream, as it issues from the standing waters of the lake, brightens and becomes beautifully clear; it has a lovely tinge of blue, whilst the delicate white deposit with which it covers its bed, renders it at eight o'clock in the morning, just as the rays of the sun are beginning to scorch the shoulders, a most tempting bath; one whose invitation I did not decline, and it was one of the

* Such were the renowned ancestors of half the nobility of Europe.

† Such occurrences appear perhaps scarcely worthy of noting down, and yet, the sensations I experienced in beholding the simplest object along this antique road over which I had so often travelled, in the greedily devoured books of every tourist of my time, were more than can be expressed by words. I seemed to recognise every feature as an old acquaintance, endeared by all the associations of a long friendship, and yet, now for the first time seen, they possessed also to the full extent the all-surpassing charm of complete novelty. And these mingling emotions, giving importance to the most trifling things, must be my excuse for any trivial description or observation that may occur in this, to me, most delightful of rambles.

most delightful plunges I ever enjoyed. My sulphur bath excited my appetite, and shortly after, I followed a trickling stream, that crossed the road, to its source, and finding it a most delicious spring, sat down to my breakfast, hungry and glowing, and delighted with all around me. The merry lizards, as the sun became more powerful, commenced running up and down, and athwart the ridges of the *campagna* around me, like little creatures of mechanism set with jewels; and the butterflies now flitted past me in such profusion that I could no longer keep my seat, and jumping up, net in hand, with the first sweep round my head took seven at once, including a beautiful specimen of the “*Apollo*,” a wanderer most likely from the neighbouring Apennines. Before I returned to my deserted breakfast, I had some of the finest specimens I ever met with of the elegant *Colias Edusa*, the golden *Cleopatra*, the *veined white*, and a variety of the pretty fly, which English collectors call the *Bath beauty*. The air became actually crowded with the painted beauties of the insect world; it seemed as though all the flowers of the *campagna* had taken wing, and as the sun shone upon the gorgeous, petal-like wings, they were almost too vivid to look upon.

As I resumed my meal, tempering the contents of my flask with the sparkling water of the spring, I observed near to my feet one of those beautiful lizards of emerald green, whose bright colour immeasurably surpasses the glittering mail of the rose beetle. This species is much larger than the little playful creatures that flit across the roads, and up and down the old walls of Italy, being full six or seven inches in length. I knew it to be the *warning lizard*, as it usually called, from an idea current among the peasantry, that many have been frequently preserved by this little reptile from the bite of the viper, of whose approach, a peasant, while sleeping upon the grass, is warned by this green lizard; which instantly begins running briskly over the face and hands of the threatened sleeper, till he awakes; and if he is aware of the meaning of the alarm, hastens to find and destroy the viper. Whether this be true or not, I have certainly observed that wherever I found this lizard, a snake was always near: never on any occasion have I found, upon beating round, that this tradition has not been verified; though I believe all the snakes I found to be of perfectly harmless species, similar to the common hedge snake of England.

However this may be, it occurred to me on the present occasion that they might sometimes be vipers, so I began to look cautiously around; and under the very ledge of stone upon which I had just placed my glass, I perceived wreathing along, but visible only here and there between twisted roots, dried grass, and fragments of stone, portions of the largest European serpent I ever beheld: it

was certainly as thick as my wrist, and its length, though that I could only guess at, appeared very considerable; I involuntarily stepped back, and, but for its own activity in springing away, I should inevitably have crushed my warning lizard; when, hearing a rustling behind me, I turned, and discovered close upon me a figure not the best calculated to allay my agitation.

There stood a man, above six feet high, his dark eyes lowering upon me, his bearded chin spreading its shaggy fringe over his expansive and sun-burnt chest, a wide mouth partially open, discovering a set of white teeth, apparently displaying themselves at the aspect of booty or prey, for he was a wild looking animal enough; whilst over his shoulder he swung an immense club, and his whole person was studded with arms of various descriptions. Such was the result of my first hasty glance; a second convinced me that my visitant was no other than the eccentric Signor B——i, whose passion for entomology has led him to a life of singular wildness: passing weeks and sometimes months in the campagna, or among the Apennines, with no other shelter night or day than a ruin, or an old tree; the latter however being pretty scarce in the Roman plain. The horrid grin, imagined at my first glance, I perceived to be a smile of salute; the various arms were different implements for taking and preserving insects, and the large club, which he lowered in salute to my butterfly-catcher, I perceived to be nothing more than a net like my own, which I had stuck upright in the ground, and was in fact the finger-post which had guided the eccentric Italian to my rural *déjeûné*. We had never met before, but our implements of war were a sufficient introduction. I invited my fellow fly-catcher to share my meal, and likewise to assist me in my meditated attack upon the snake, to both of which he willingly consented, and after having destroyed the reptile, preserving the skin, we concluded together a frugal repast which I shall long remember.

We exhibited our respective captures of the morning, and effected some exchanges, I receiving a fine scorpion and a tarantula spider in return for some fine, though not rare, specimens of *Coleoptera*, which I had just taken. With this wild looking, bearded companion, I passed a few of the most agreeable hours of my life, for he opened to my view many new and startling glimpses of the not half-explored regions of the insect world; and his knowledge, not fused in the close chamber, but imbibed in the plain and on the mountain, in the night season and the early dawn, came sparkling, as it were, in its truth and vividness, from the unalloyed fountain of nature herself.

There are many who, if they thought at all upon the subject, might consider entomology a frivolous study; but nothing in nature raises the mind to a

higher degree of admiration than the insect world:—"Immense number—endless variety—astonishing metamorphoses—exceeding beauty—complex and wonderful organizations, far exceeding that of the highest ranks of animal creation, all tend to prove an Almighty artificer, and to inspire feelings of astonishment and awe, which can be known in the fullest extent, perhaps to those alone who have penetrated the wonderful secrets with which nature abounds;" and entomology furnishes more links perhaps than any other science to prove the existence of

"The mighty chain of being, lessening down
From *Infinite Perfection* to the brink
Of dreary nothing, desolate abyss."

I proceeded in company with my new acquaintance towards Tivoli, and though the sun was become very oppressive, there was a refreshing breeze playing across the campagna, that softened the ardour of the noontide ray, and rendered our walk agreeable. In continuing our way, with many a chase after some painted butterfly, or glittering beetle, or large purple bee, we crossed the little bridge of the Anio, and rested a short distance farther, in the shade of the magnificent tomb of Plautius,—a circular mausoleum in fine preservation, surpassing perhaps even that of Cecilia Metella, on the Appian Way. From hence my companion led me to a hollow behind the first spur of the Apennine chain, in which are the quarries of the celebrated *lapis Tiburtinus*, now corrupted to *Travertino*, with which the wonders of ancient and modern Rome were both constructed—the Coliseum and St. Peter's. On the right of the rugged road are the ancient quarries, overgrown with brushwood, and deserted; and on the left, the modern workings, still in activity, and from which stone is daily supplied for the principal works of Rome.

We now began rapidly to ascend, and as we quitted the plain, luxuriant woods, olive groves, trailing vineyards, and prolific gardens, began to hem us in on all sides, till we were fairly enclosed between the white walls that border the narrow and steep road up to the town of Tivoli, the ancient Tibur. Nevertheless, we here and there got a peep of surpassing beauty over a broken wall, or through some ruined gateway. Here it was the magnificent but decaying Villa d'Este, with its terraces and statues, its crumbling and streamless fountains, and its groves of towering cypresses; there appeared a convent, the *Collegio greco di propaganda-fide*, with its broad and many-windowed wings spreading behind the olive groves; and then again, a rich morsel of broken foreground cutting out sharply against the mellowed tints of its mountain back-ground. We enjoyed a

charming saunter, and neither felt the steepness of the hill nor the burning sun, but were seated at our table in the yard of the locanda, in the beautiful ruins of the Temple of Vesta*, with the splendid cascade dashing beneath, ere we thought of calculating that we had walked eighteen miles, without counting butterfly races, and the greater part in the heat of the day.

As we sat enjoying a most excellent dinner, which our host had provided with a celerity almost equal to the impatience of our desires, a spruce party of English arrived; and as I observed among them two very pretty girls, whom I had frequently met in Rome, I blush to confess that I felt somewhat ashamed of my uncouth companion; for my polite bow of recognition was returned rather coolly, as the eyes of my fair acquaintances glanced towards the strange figure who sat opposite to me. They were, at all events, very quickly satisfied that they had seen enough of the Temple; and, as they were staying at the other inn, La Regina, I was soon left to the quiet enjoyment of my more intellectual companion, and forgot the pretty unmeaning faces in the impassioned descriptions, explanations, and theories that the entomologist was pouring forth, as from an inexhaustible fountain of knowledge; while I was employed in sketching a young girl, who, in the picturesque costume of Tivoli, sat spinning against a portion of the ruin.

Hours flew as we thus discussed our Orvieto, and the day was sinking into evening ere we rose to explore the lions of Tivoli. We strolled to the ruins of the Villa of Hadrian, the architect emperor; who, though but a sort of royal dandy in the art, certainly produced, by his patronage, some finer things than the Pavilion at Brighton, or the palace at Buckingham Gate. But the incongruous assemblage of Grecian, Egyptian, and Roman amalgamations at Tibur, the productions of his own fancy, have, I cannot but imagine, a much finer effect in the ruins, than in all their splendour as the autumnal *delizia* of the emperor. It is but fair, however, to allow that by his encouragement, the arts, already upon the decline, were again raised to a pitch nearly equal to that of their zenith, as is still testified by works which he left to the design of the great architects whom he drew to Rome from every corner of his vast dominions. Amid these ruins of libraries, theatres, temples, and baths—amid the shades of the fanciful Emperor's Tartarus and Elysium; his Academia, his Natatorium, and his Vale of Tempè—

* This beautiful temple is supposed upon pretty good authority to have been built in the time of Sylla. Its greatest peculiarity consists in the singular foliage of the Corinthian capital, which is not as usual formed of the acanthus leaf, but of one rather resembling that of the *Verbascum Sinuatum*. The variation has found many modern imitators, and is known as the Tivoli capital, a good specimen of which, and indeed of a segment of the circular temple itself, may be seen at the angle of the Bank of England. Lord Bristol had the bad taste to purchase this beautiful ruin, and attempt its *removal*, but the Roman government interfered.





we passed several hours ; and it was moonlight ere we returned through the narrow and irregular streets of Tivoli, towards the cascade so often celebrated by the poets and historians of ancient Rome. The Anio is here precipitated from a height of, I should think, 300 feet ; rushing down in one sheet between rocks of knurled and picturesque shape, wonderfully wrought into fanciful forms by the calcareous deposits of the turgid waters. Leaping and dashing among the gigantic fragments torn down by successive inundations, it reaches the bottom of the narrow valley, and at length plunges fearfully into a dark abyss, and disappears ; immersing from its subterraneous passage at a distance of some hundred yards ; where it commences a more peaceful course, watering one of the most lovely valleys in Italy ere it quits its native mountains to wander through the flat campagna, and eventually lose itself in the Tiber.

The fearful chasm which for a time engulphs the Anio, is called the Grotto della Sirena, as the guide learnedly explains, from its being “ fascinating and enthralling to behold, but dangerous to approach.” Many accidents have in fact occurred ; and lately a young Englishman, advancing too hastily towards the edge of the precipice, slipped, and fell—a melancholy event which is recorded upon one of the monuments in the Protestant burial-ground at Rome. As the scene was now illumined, by the powerful chiaroscuro of the moon, the effect was sublime ; and we stood long upon the spot, dashed by the scattering spray, and unable, from the din of the falling torrent, to communicate otherwise than by a glance or a sign. We re-ascended, by the convenient path cut in the rock by General Miollis, during the French occupation ; and spent the remainder of the evening on the rock above, among the ruins of the Villa of Mæcenas, and in sight of that of Vopiscus, celebrated in the verse of Statius. Here, upon a green knoll in a grove of olives, the very spot, perhaps, where Horace sat, dreaming into immortal verse the scene around, we sat indulging wayward thought, and listening to the softened sound of the cascade, whose hoarse music had never ceased since Horace sung, and seemed like a voice connecting the dim past with the vivid present, and speaking of deeds and things of which no other witness remains : our reveries were interrupted by the sight of an immense moth, of unusual dimensions, fluttering past ; and our chase, though ineffectual, bringing us near to our inn, we separated for the night ; and, retiring to a very comfortable bed, I soon forgot Tibur or Tivoli, Horace, Hadrian, or Vopiscus, but went to sleep with the sound of the cascade still singing in my ears.

Stirring by six next morning, I hastened to renew my colloquies with my eccentric companion, but he was gone ; he had paid his share of the reckoning

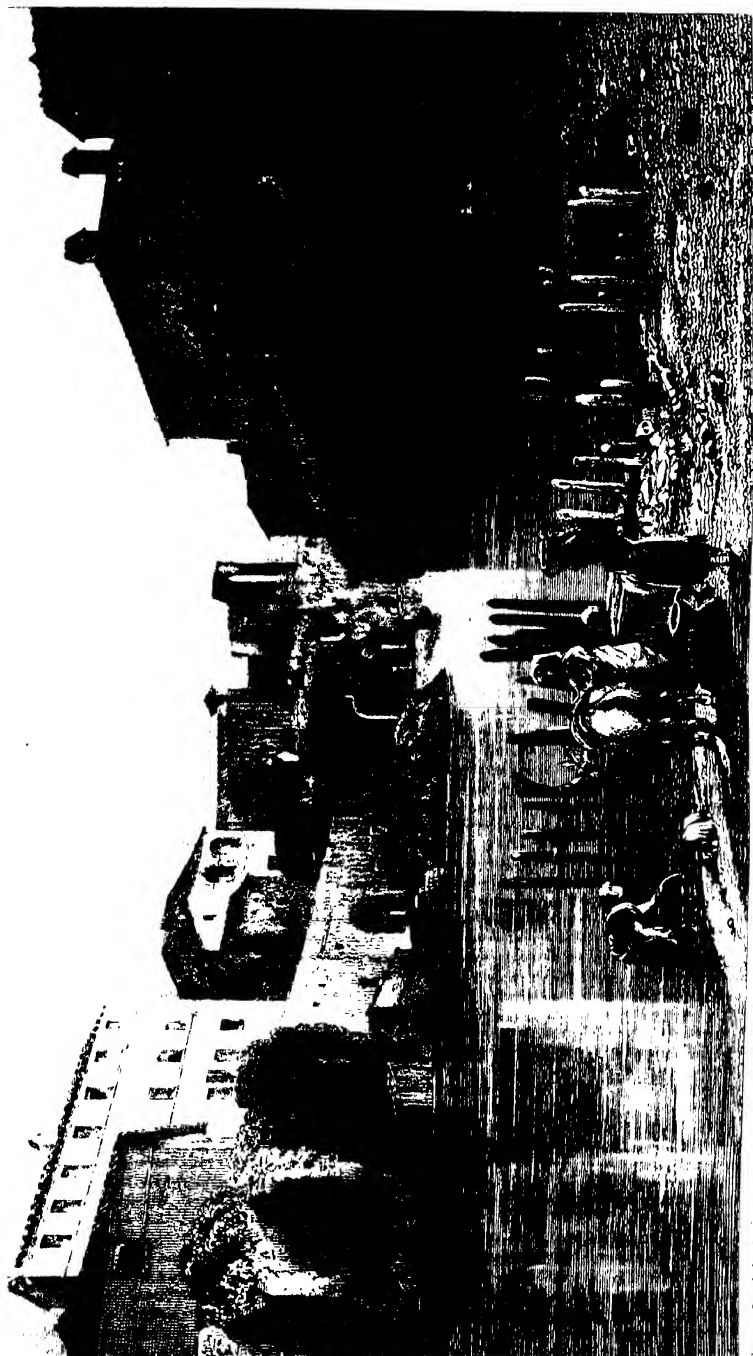
the previous night, and had departed with the dawn of day. We never met again; and I cannot express the sensation of loneliness that for a time oppressed me upon this sudden separation, although our companionship had been but one of twelve hours. I strolled down to the Cascade; but whether it wanted the moonbeam to restore the effect which it had at first produced, or whether the eloquent reminiscences of the naturalist, I know not—all seemed stale and uninteresting; and even the picturesque rocks, with the tall flower stalks of the aloes rising above the olive trees and bushes of the Indian fig, which were not distinguishable at a night view, failed, for a time, to produce the effect that picturesque beauty seldom fails to create.

Previous to leaving Tivoli, on my route to Palestrina, Frascati, Albano, and thence back to Rome, I visited the vast remains termed the Villa of Quintilius Varus, those of Mecenas, and others which modern antiquaries have not yet complimented with a name. Here, as Woods eloquently expresses it in his elegant Letters, “we seem to have got among the works of a race whose exertions were not limited by the weakness and poverty of modern man. I have wandered through these immense places with continually increasing astonishment; and one may add to the effect of the ruins themselves, that all the situations are enchanting; some commanding more perfectly the campagna and distant Rome; others enjoying better the delightful valley of the Anio, where rocks and cultivation, vines, olives, and natural woods, unite to enrich and vary the scene; and the “cascatelle” pour down the steep and rocky bank in white foam, occasioning a light mist, which hangs as a beautiful veil over the surrounding objects.”

The picturesque buildings of the modern town, too, offer some beautiful combinations of form, which have not been neglected by the landscape painters of all nations who flock to Italy; and few fair subjects have oftener sat for their portrait than Tivoli.

Here we are in the neighbourhood of some of the mountain springs, whose pure waters were conducted to Rome by her great citizens, upon the stupendous arches of those aqueducts which are among the greatest remaining wonders of ancient magnificence; unequalled till the capacities of steam forced into existence the modern railways*, at present, the most extensive works that man in any age of his eventful history has produced. Most beautifully situated are the sources of some of these celebrated waters; particularly those in the valley of the Anio above

* We must recollect, however, that railways have been produced by the combined capital of great companies, whilst the Roman aqueducts were, in many instances, the work of single and private individuals.



Tivoli ; namely, the *Anio vetus*, the *Marcia*, and the *Claudia* ; a few miles beyond which latter spring is the *fons Bandusiæ* of Horace, still a sparkling and limpid fountain.

Along the road to Subiaco I had many opportunities of studying Cyclopean architecture, to the antiquity of which even the ruins of the republic and empire of Rome are but modern works ; for to these earliest specimens of European architecture, antiquaries assign an antiquity of 1800 years before Christ ; and the earliest employment of such masonry is stated, by bold speculators, to have been in the Temple of Hercules, at Tyre, 2760 years before that era. However correct these assertions of antiquaries may be, it seems probable that none of this stupendous stone work is so modern as the foundation of Rome ; and none of its remains are to be found in that neighbourhood, whilst at Palestrina (*Præneste*), Rome's immediate predecessor as queen of this region, they are abundant.

We may fairly imagine, that in some of the earliest specimens we see relics of the first architectural efforts of man, when he ceased to be a dweller in tents, and began to congregate in cities.

Three distinct eras may be traced in the mode of constructing these ponderous walls. In the first period they are built of large irregular blocks of stone, without trimming, but the smoothest side placed outwards ; while the interstices are filled with smaller stones, selected to fit as nearly as possible the spaces left between the larger ones ; and so well is the work performed, that, without cement, many of these walls are now as firm and unshaken as when built ; and appear as though they might defy the ravages of time for ever, if time were the only enemy they had to contend with. In the second era the use of rude tools is perceptible in the trimming of the exterior surface, and one may easily conceive the more accurate fittings to be produced by the use of the leaden rule described by Herodotus* ; which being bent to fit the *internal* angle left on the top of the work, would then be applied to the *external* angles of the stone intended to fill it. In the third period, lines nearly horizontal are more numerous than those in any other direction, and here and there some appearances of level courses ; which, on a farther advance of the art, in what might almost be separated as a fourth period, became regular, which regularity is frequently preserved by a notch, to let the larger stone partially into the course above or below, and so retain the general character of the horizontal line. The second style is most common in Latium,

* Woods' Letters, vol. ii. p. 12.

the fourth in Tuscany; by which it would seem that Latium was the more ancient seat of civilization, which might account for the better preservation of the Etruscan cities, visited as curious antiquities by the Romans* themselves.

Along these mountain roads one may observe the peasant children in the picturesque, but frequently wretched dress, gathering the young shoots of the "traveller's joy" (*clematis-vitalba*), which is cooked as a vegetable. The whole aspect of the country is varied and beautiful.

Subiaco stands on a rock at the end of the valley, with a noble view of mountain and ravine beyond, as far as the eye can reach; and near the town are ruins of the Baths of Nero; but objects far more worthy of notice are the Convents of St. Scholastica and St. Benedict, particularly the latter; which was built near the caverns sanctified by the residence of the saint; and which may be seen opening at intervals in the face of a vast perpendicular rock, and have been piously converted into chapels. The convent church is of considerable size, and communicates, by flights of steps cut in the rock, with the cavern chapels above mentioned; causing that mixture of natural grottos with the piers and vaults of gothic architecture, covered with antique paintings†, which, together with the savage character of the exterior scenery, form a combination perfectly unique, and to see which, would alone be worth a journey to Subiaco.

The remaining route to Palestrina is equally fine, and the towns and villages, perched (Acropolis-like) upon the very tops of apparently inaccessible rocks, have an indescribably fine effect. Some of these are very populous, and the facilities of more rapid intercommunication would soon make this favoured and beautiful region as rich in social and commercial advantages as it is in natural beauties.

My next day was devoted to the antiquities of Palestrina, whose Temple must have been a truly stupendous agglomeration of buildings. The modern town stands on the site of the extensive ruin, and does not occupy the whole. A modern town within an ancient temple! whilst the gardens of the Barberini family occupy but part of one of its lower terraces. Then, again to add to the wonder, the whole platform of this vast Temple is supported entirely upon massive vaults, or walls of Cyclopean architecture; so that our astonishment at the extent of the building, is overwhelmed when we consider the fact, of a place being first built for it to stand upon,—a work rendered necessary by the

* Pliny.

† Woods' Letters, vol. ii. p. 74.

inequalities of the ground, in this rocky and precipitous district. There is a road from hence direct to Rome, part of which passes over the ancient *Via Prænestina*; but its pavement, whatever may be its merits of durability, is from its smoothness somewhat dangerous for horses. This interesting place, the scene of the wars of Sylla, the retreat of Marius, and in later times the impregnable strong hold of the Colonna, is now the property of the Barberini family, who, however, never visit its palace, which is fast decaying from want of occupancy.

Indeed, but a few years ago it might be said, that no member of the family had seen it for three generations,* and a scion of this *active* and *enterprising* race of princes, once assigned as a reason, “that it was too far for his own horses, and not worth posting.” Here Shelley has laid the scene of part of his fine tragedy of “*The Cenci*”, and here Cardinal Barberini afforded a refuge to the bandit and assassin Scarpalega; who was enabled, by gold, profusely tendered—“the palace-walking devil, gold,” as Shelley has it—to induce the Cardinal to assist his evasion of the minister of justice, of Clement IX., in 1667; whose Shirri in vain sought to track the route of the fugitive.†

The next day brought me to Frascati, by still journeying along the picturesque roads, amid the ring of mountains that incloses the campagna in a vast semi-circle; rising near Terni on the northern point, to terminate at La Riccia on the south, leaving a long strip of some twenty miles between their last spurs and the Mediterranean. Frascati (the ancient Tusculum) has been, both in ancient and modern times, the favourite autumnal retreat of the Romans, and the ruins of ancient villas, and the splendid architecture of its crowd of modern ones, form its chief attraction; the latter of which I have spoken of in another place. I visited the ruins of Tusculum, and also the villa Rufanelli, the residence of Lucien Bonaparte, to whose persevering excavations we are indebted for a sight of the long-buried *Via Triumphalis*, and many interesting remains in the vicinity.

The next day, making a detour to see Grotta Ferrata, and the wonderful frescoes of Domenichino, and a fine work of Guercino's at Marino, I passed Castel Gandolfo and its lovely lake, and then the still more lovely scenery of those of Albano, with its wonderful “*emissario*”, and Nemi, where the peculiar features of the fairy-like inland scenes of Claude are realized. Here was his school, and here were suggested those beautiful creations which are among the brightest gems of our galleries of art.

* Lady Morgan.

† There are mosaics, vases, &c., of much interest, preserved in the palace of the Barberini at Palestrina; but things which would occupy weeks of careful examination any where else, in Rome and its neighbourhood, are passed by with little notice in the profusion of objects that command the attention.

At Genzano, which I reached about mid-day, I found nothing worthy of record, in the midst of this teeming world of associations, but its luscious wine; a draught of which in the heat of the day seemed to realize the ambrosial wonders of the fabled nectar. Proceeding along the great road from Rome to Naples, upon which I now was, I soon reached La Riccia; most picturesquely situated on the crest of a rock, overlooking a finely wooded plain in the direction of the sea. Here I was taken over the great palace of the Chigi, from the terrace of which are some fine views, and here also I collected a few rare and beautiful insects; but I hurried forward to Albano. On the road I passed the tomb which has long passed for that of the Curiatii; but some pronounce it a monument to Pompey, and Nibbi thinks it the sepulchre of Aruns, the son of Porsenna, and assigns another at the end of the town to Pompey:* his chief argument for both suppositions being, that he has found *no testimony to the contrary* among the ancient writers.

Leaving Albano for Rome, the most interesting portion of the wide campagna opens gradually upon the traveller, striped with the dark lines of aqueducts, and dotted over with the crumbling ruins of the far-stretching outskirts and suburban villas of the ancient city;

‘ and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast.”

This is looking to the west; the view to the east is not less striking or interesting in its associations, for, as the same pen has added,

‘ Where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight,
The Sabine farm was tilled, the weary bard’s delight.”

Nearly in the traveller’s path towards Rome, stretches away the line of the disused Appian way, displaying at the highest point its crowning ruin, the tomb of Cecilia Metella—

“ That stern round tower of other days”—

which the sublime reflections of Byron have made his monument as well as her’s: indeed, the immortal song of “ Childe Harold” has associated itself as strongly

* See Woods’ Letters.



with the wreck of Rome as her own eventful story. He appears to have been particularly struck with this beautiful tomb, which is, apart from every poetic association, a glorious monument of ancient art. Its masonry is still so very perfect that the edge of a penknife could not be inserted between the blocks of marble of which it is built, which without cement are thus beautifully fitted, merely by the extreme accuracy and perfection of the workmanship. It rivals in this respect the celebrated ruins of Attica, and is, perhaps, the only remaining Roman specimen that does approach those most perfect works of art in its most perfect age.

In its circular part, this monument is still very perfect, whilst the more massive square pedestal is broken and crumbling. The ancients judged well in making the circle and the pyramid emblems of eternity. The monuments thus formed are the most perfect of Roman remains.

Following the line of the ancient way, I at length turned aside to reach the tomb of the Scipios, *within* the fortifications of Aurelian, though *without* the ancient wall; for the state admitted but in rare instances interment within the city. This ought to form one of the most interesting shrines for the visits of the pilgrims; but—

“ The Scipios’ tomb contains no ashes now ;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers.”

One sarcophagus, that of Scipio Barbatus, has been removed to the Vatican museum, and forms but an item in a show which idle curiosity hurries over as a morning lounge. The curious, however, stay awhile to examine the inscription, which is interesting as the composition of a period when the Latin language had not attained to the maturity of its perfection; and the irregularities of grammatical construction according, as they do, with the date and style of sculpture, place beyond a doubt its authenticity*. I terminated my ramble with the tomb of the Scipios, and some other relics of the road of tombs†.

But on the Albano side of Rome is the Grotto of Egeria, with its scattered

* The tomb possesses also other curious proofs of being in fact the vault of the Scipios; for it is mentioned, both by Pliny and Cicero, that that family did not follow the usual mode of *burning* their dead, but *buried* them. And, in fact, the vault contains no *cinerary urns*, but is furnished with stone cases, or coffins, formed of pieces of Travertino. The numerous inscriptions discovered there are scattered all over Europe. The few crumbling bones were carried off by a Venetian nobleman, and form the great lion of his villa, near Padua.

† No one can render complete his examination of Roman tombs, without visiting a columbarium, and I would recommend the one out of the Porta Pia, as perhaps the most perfect.

violets, "pale from growing in the shade," and the Temple of Rediculus, and a crowd of other interesting ruins, which it is impossible to dwell upon. Things, too, that upon the spot possess many scarcely explicable charms, would have none in a mere catalogue raisonné; particularly in cases where no name or purpose can be, with any degree of probability, assigned to them, as is the case with the greatest portion of this chaos of scattered and unintelligible remains.

"The ocean has her chart, the stars their map,
But Rome is as a desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections ;"

and seldom, perhaps, stumbling on the right; yet have these relics, on their own shrine, indescribable charms and associations, which, however, cannot, as I have said, be infused into dull characters of ink on paper.

I intended saying something here of Ostia, Nettuno, and Fusina, while speaking of the environs of Rome, and to have expatiated on the wonders that remain of the vast basins at the mouth of the Tiber, constructed at such vast expense and labour; where the Roman fleets once rode triumphant, but where now dank marshes exhale the infected vapours of the malaria, which is the curse of large districts in this part of Italy; and has led to so much discussion.

Some have imagined that this malaria is the consequence of neglected cultivation in modern times alone, but there is good authority for asserting it to have been equally prevalent in ancient Rome. It is alluded to by Pliny, and other writers. Pliny, for instance, tells us that Regulus staid at a house on the western side of the river, for the malicious pleasure of making people visit him at the unhealthy season; whilst Tacitus mentions the fact, that soldiers quartered on the Vatican suffered from a fever similar to the one now caused by malaria. None would imagine, in riding or walking over the finely undulated surface of the plain of Rome, and admiring its carpet of flowers, that the fresh yet balmy breezes that fan and revive the traveller, as they gently temper the rays of the mid-day sun, can be tainted with disease and death. Over its wide and unbroken extent a gentle wind is nearly always playing, as on the sea; and yet, delightful as it seems, it is but a delicious poison. But who would wish to add a page to the contending volumes already written upon this subject? and yet perhaps, some curious experiments of Savi and Passerini are worth noticing. It appears that there abounds throughout the unhealthy region a genus of plants called "chara," which emit a foetid smell, similar to that of the marshes themselves; and from repeated observations, and most elaborate analysis, these gentlemen have arrived

at the conclusion, that the putrid or fœtid principle of this genus “chara” is, if not the only, at least one of the principal, causes of the malaria of Italy. The Count de Tournon, in his “*Etudes Statistiques sur Rome*,” seems decidedly of opinion that the climate is not changed; but that the ancients counteracted, or, at all events, mitigated, the effects of malaria, by their prudent modes of diet and dress, and by the suitable construction of their habitations; and in no other way can we account for the existence of the thirty flourishing towns which once existed even in the Pontine Marshes. It is easy to conceive, with this view of the case, that were the campagna of Rome distributed into small portions, and cultivated by independent proprietors, it might again be rendered safe and habitable. But who can expect such events from its present Government? whose stolid acts and apparent superstitions would almost make one see, like Shelley, in his *Prometheus*—

- “a mighty darkness
Filling the seat of power, and rays of gloom
Dart round.”

CHAPTER V.

ROMAN RUINS.

ROME is a great modern city, with busy streets, and glittering shops, and moving busy crowds ; but that is not the Rome the traveller has journeyed far to behold. He seeks the scene of heroic deeds that have formed the first glowing impressions on his youthful mind ; the first seeds of historic lore ; the first incentives to ambitious dreams, and high emprise ; he seeks to tread the ground once trodden by those who bore names familiar to his childhood, as those of kindred. Other portions of Italy derive their deepest interest from men and events belonging to modern time ; but the first desire created by the name of Rome, is to behold the scene of the eventful drama of the last great empire of the ancient world. One longs to behold the spot, where stood the hall, in which the senators in their godlike state awaited the victorious Gauls ; and to behold but one sculptured stone to stamp it with reality, and prove it not a fable or a dream : he longs to climb the Capitol, the scene of the early glories and later triumphs of the people of Romulus ; and in its remnant masonry and neighbouring ruins, each successive description of which he has read with such avidity, behold still existing witnesses of those events, and evidences of their reality. He wishes to stand in the forum, the Forum Romanum, and judge for himself, whether the remaining ruins are evidences sufficient of the truth of pictures so firmly painted on his imagination, when it was

“ wax to receive and marble to retain ;”

to prove them not cheats or fables, but stern realities.

With such feelings, his steps mechanically turn in the direction of the Campo Vaccino. He passes along the crowded Corso, and sees the magnificent column of Antoninus, still nearly as perfect as when first erected, though a Saint has supplanted the Emperor on its apex ; driving the imperial spirit from the tomb

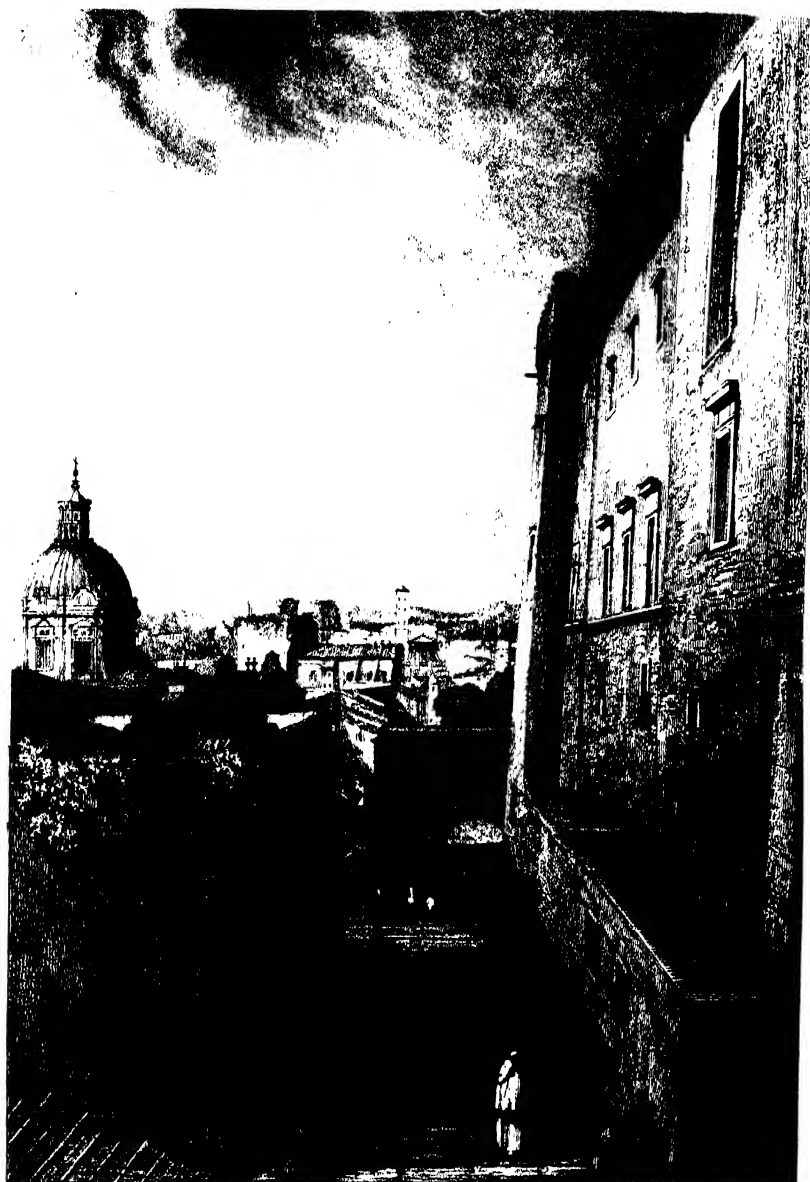
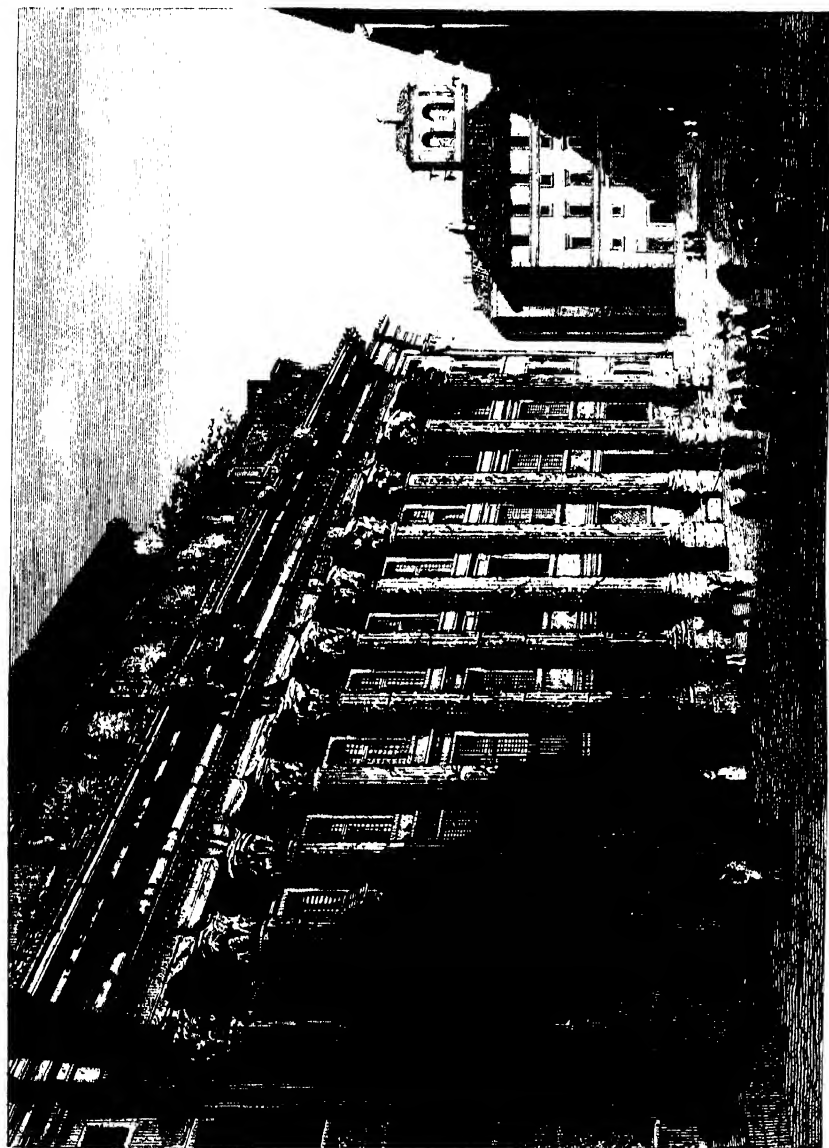


Fig. 1. A view of the Piazza del Campidoglio.



it sought, in the blue vault of heaven. But this does not satisfy his craving for beholding works of Roman hands : it is surrounded by modern buildings ; even shops, and a *post-office*, form part of the square of which it is the central object. These accessories destroy the visions he would kindle around him ; he hurries forward, and is shewn the still more perfect column of Trajan, which no doubt served as the model for the later work of the Antonines, and in our own days for the French trophy, on the Place Vendôme.

This column is doubtless one of the finest remains of Roman art, and of which any one who has seen the column on the Place Vendôme at Paris may form a good idea, by imagining the material of that work changed to white marble ; and by supposing the spiral relievos to represent the Dacian triumphs of Trajan, instead of the Napoleon victories of the *grande nation*. But the Trajan column, though in a quieter part of Rome than that of Antonine, is yet surrounded by modern buildings ; and even the excavations and architectural remains about its base, can scarcely revive with sufficient vigour the associations which should accompany their contemplation.

The fine ruins of the Temple of Mars Ultor are near ; but they have been partially transformed to a church, whose singular old square tower surmounts with grotesque, but not disagreeable effect, the Corinthian columns ; and occupying a place in the side of a street, they do not produce the effect expected from the ruins of Rome. Yet, these ancient columns shooting up among and mingling with the habitations of living man, have a singular and indescribable effect upon the feelings. Frequently a highly enriched door-way, that in the days of its newness was the entrance to a palace or a temple, forms the gateway of a stable yard ; and in this and other parts of Rome, that modern improvements have not reached, many interesting remains are built up in the wretched houses of the lower orders, where it is not at all uncommon to see highly wrought columns, sometimes of precious materials, gleaming through the plaster ; and in the fish-market, among the ruins of the Portico of Octavia, the sheds and hovels look like rooks' nests hung about among the gigantic pillars.

Near the pillar of Trajan also, on the road towards the Forum, is another ruin, which is pointed out to the traveller : it appears to be part of a Temple of Minerva ; its columns are buried to nearly two-thirds of their height, and consequently the enrichments of the superb architecture brought near to the eye, which cannot fail to express astonishment at their elaborate and highly-wrought detail. Modern imitations of a Corinthian or composite order give no idea of the respective styles, as practised in the best age of Roman art. They are but meagre and

imperfect copies, seizing only the obvious features of the column, the capital, and the general proportions of the cornice*, without any finishing detail, and are incapable of giving the slightest idea of the superb originals—any more than modern efforts in the gothic style can convey any idea of York Minster, or the choir at Beauvais.

Yet even that rich *morceau*† of ancient art fails to satisfy : but the passage through one or two short, narrow, and half-deserted streets, now brings the traveller into the Campo Vaccino;—he is in the Forum—and the scene around touches the most highly strung chords of his imagination ;—he has left the streets of modern Rome—he is alone with the Coliseum—the triumphal arches—the Palace of the Cæsars—and the crumbling columns of the high places of ancient Rome. I can conceive no after sensation of a similar nature like that first glimpse of the Roman Forum.

But the loneliness of such a spot becomes oppressive in its sublimity, and the mind seeks companions to share the spectacle : one seeks to people it with its antique crowds, rolling in their gilded chariots, or hustling each other in their busy march of interest or pleasure ; but the readiest fancy can realize the vision but for a moment. The ruins ring the knell of time, and a cloud of Goths envelops the glittering vision in its mist.

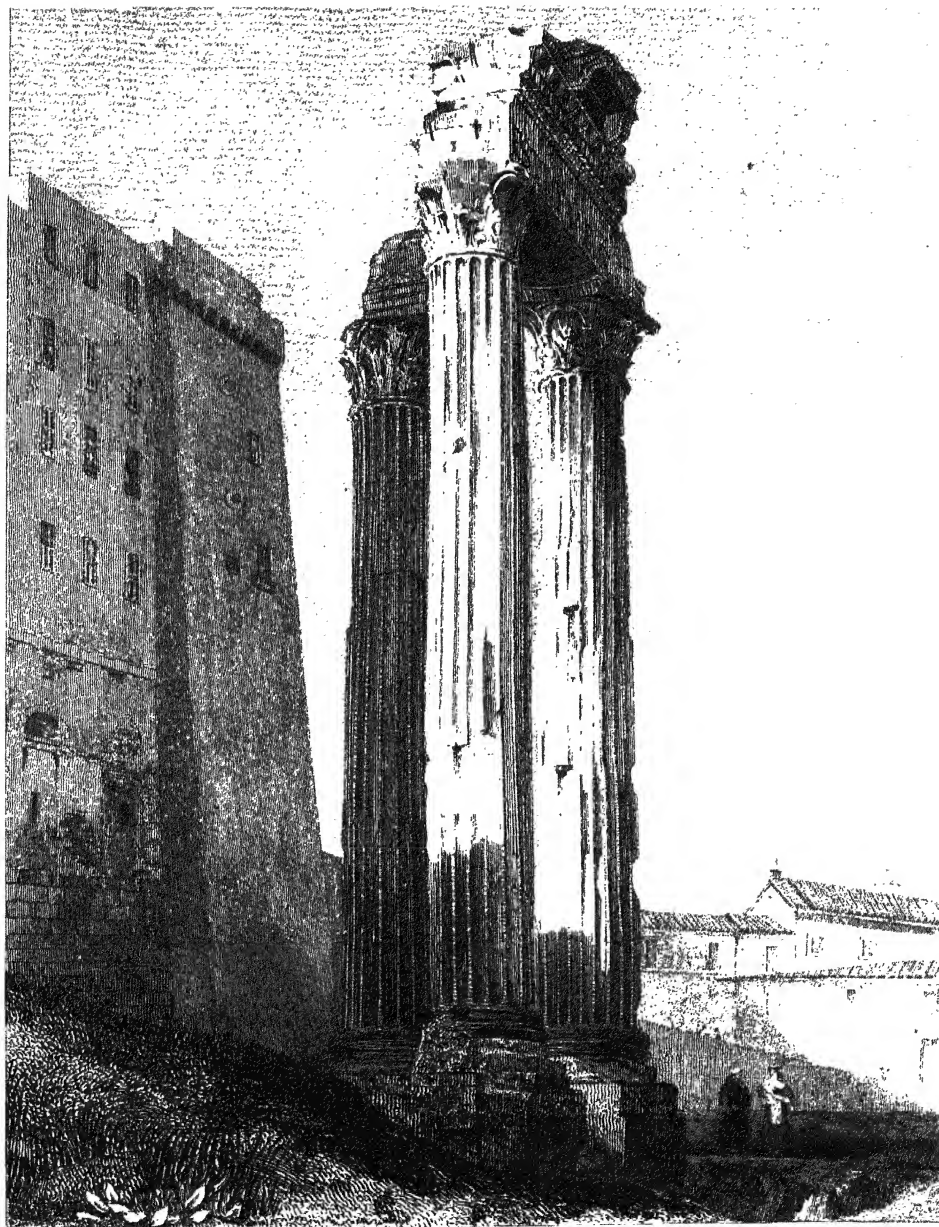
It is an exciting sport of imagination to create such a scene : but how much more striking might be the converse of the picture ! Let us but imagine the Roman people assembled in the great amphitheatre, gifted for an instant with the power of seeing *us*. What a fearful picture!—the Coliseum shrunk to a skeleton around them ;—the marble seats crumbling to dust beneath them ;—and strangers of dress and language unheard of—unconceived—wandering with curious gaze amid its dreary precincts. How much more awful is the future than the past !

But I must return to realities, and examine separately the ruins of the Forum, the Capitol, and the Palatine hill. On the Capitoline hill, nothing remains of Tarquin's Temple to Jupiter Optimus Maximus ; in digging the foundations of which, the skull was found, which the augurs declared emblematical of future empire, and which Livy mentions, as the origin of the name ; from *Caput* and *Olius* ; head of Tolinus, or Olius. The high ground is almost entirely encased on the side next the Forum with ancient and massive masonry, which, most

* The latter more frequently neglected, or reduced to most meagre dimensions.

† This ruin attracted the particular attention of Inigo Jones, who saw many portions afterwards removed by Paul V., for the sake of the marble : on the authority of *Xiphilin*, he attributed the work to Apollodorus, before the reign of Hadrian.





probably formed part of the Tabularium*. But the ornamental portion of the work above these substructions has given place to the modern Campidoglio ; and the buildings beneath, the Temple of Jupiter Tonans, and others that faced the Forum, have disappeared, leaving but confused heaps of their dust behind ; with the exception of three columns of the Temple of Jupiter Tonans, which still remain erect, supporting a portion of their architrave. They are of good style, the frieze and cornice very highly enriched, and may fairly be considered as part of the original Temple built by Augustus, in gratitude for a narrow escape from lightning which destroyed one of the bearers of his litter. The Temple, though enriched with highly-wrought work in the frieze and cornice that can scarcely be seen from below, appears to have been of small dimensions, which may be accounted for by its situation, being placed in the very core of Rome, the region of the Forum ; where every spot of ground being crowded with monuments, rendered the occupation of a large space impossible : though doubtless many things were removed or destroyed to make room for the new Temple of Augustus. A little farther from the Capitol, stand eight Ionic columns, forming part of the Temple of Concord, as is generally supposed ; but there are many speculations upon the subject. They however occupy as nearly as can be ascertained the site of that edifice, and from a recorded account of a restoration of the building by Constantine, the chance of its being the Temple of Concord acquires an additional witness ; for the workmanship of the capitals and cornice is of the most degraded Roman style, and evidently belongs to a period not very distant from that of Constantine, when Roman architecture still possessed its great leading features, but found no artist worthy to execute its ornamental details.

Near this spot are the famous Mamertine prisons, for we are about the central point from which young Rome first began to spread her future maze of buildings ; and here, in what might be termed her Acropolis, sprang in a succession of ages the most famous of her monuments ;—here, too, time seems to have spared them most. These prisons are of indubitably high antiquity, and if not to be attributed to Ancus Martius, are most likely of the period of the Kings, as appears attested by the massive yet somewhat rude style of construction. Undoubtedly these are the subterranean chambers where Jugurtha died of hunger and of darkness—horrible combination ! where the Catiline conspirators were strangled by order of Cicero ; and where the unfortunate Sejanus met the fate prepared for him by the cruel and treacherous Tiberius. We perhaps owe their preservation

* The hall where the public deeds and laws, engraved upon tablets, were preserved ; in short, the *Record Office*.

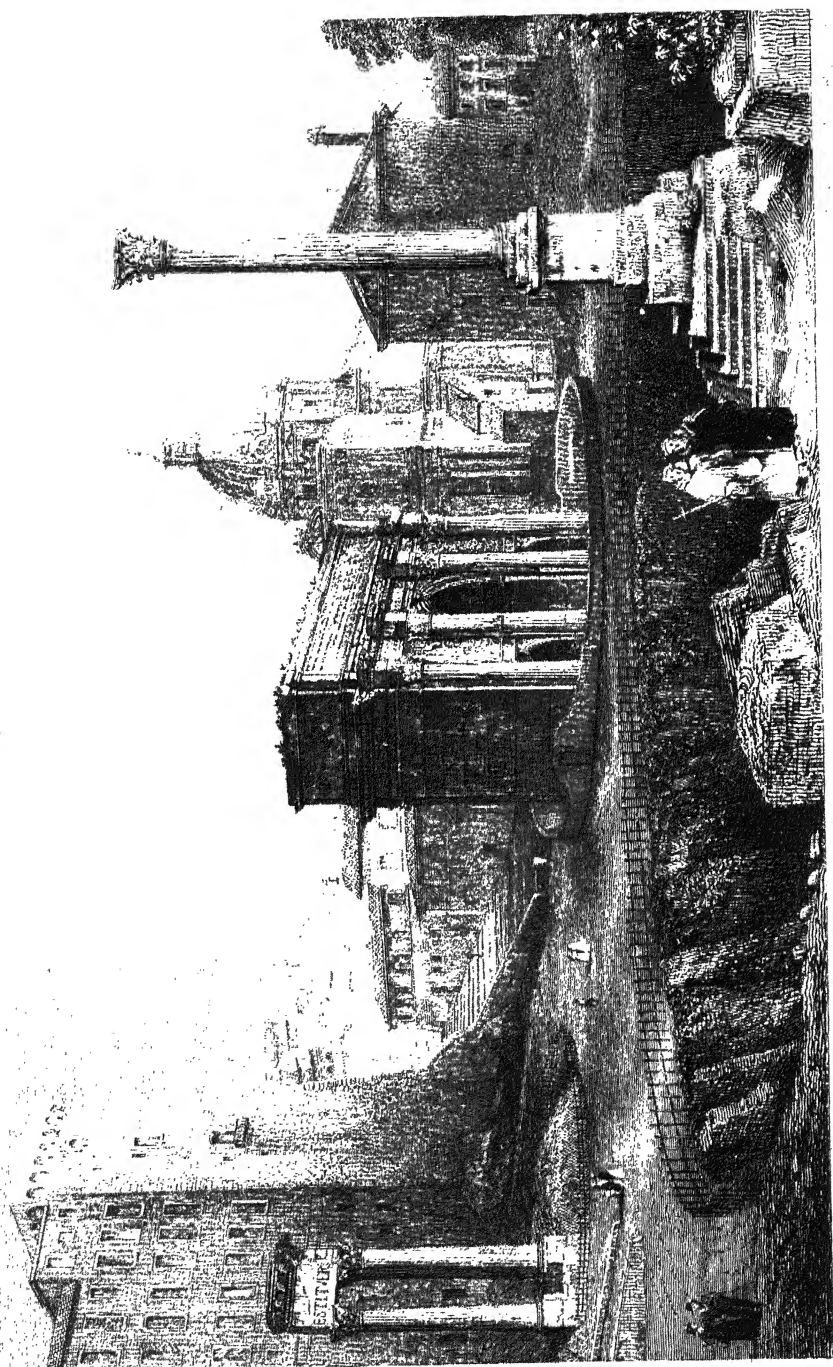
to the legend that supposes the imprisonment of St. Peter and St. Paul within their gloomy walls; which rendering them an object of care to the Romish priesthood, has caused the construction of a church above them, and bestowed miraculous powers on a spring in the lower prison (approached through an opening in the floor of the upper one), said to have sprung from the dry ground, when St. Peter wished to baptize two fellow-prisoners whom he had converted. On leaving these horrid caverns, I saw the *stair of groans* (*scalæ gemoniæ*), to which, perhaps, the lamentations of the unfortunates beneath, indistinctly heard, may have given the name.

The Arch of Septimus Severus stands near, and forms at once the monument of victory and crime, for the erasure of the name of the murdered Geta from the inscription is still visible: the characters stained with the blood of fratricide will not be effaced. The monument forms altogether an impressive mass; for although the details of sculpture are coarse and bad, the general conception of the structure is highly characteristic of that grandeur and richness of style, which still distinguished Roman art, so late as the reign of Severus*. There was till so recently as the reign of Sixtus V., a much finer monument of this period; the Septizonium, on the south side of the Palatine, which, though nearly in a perfect state, he tore down to adorn with its rich materials the already overgrown Vatican†. It would seem that Sixtus feared posterity might be too grateful to him for the great improvements he had effected in the modern city; and so determined to moderate their enthusiasm, by a career of wanton destruction, pursued among the ruins of the ancient one.

Advancing in an easterly direction, the next prominent object is the group of three superb columns, generally known as the Temple of Jupiter Stator, and it is a pity the conviction was ever disturbed. What a vivid picture of an action of heroic times did the association paint! Romulus, driven back by the Sabines to the very gates of his infant city, stretched up his arms to heaven, imploring Jupiter to stay his flying Romans; they turned again, and beat their foes. The Temple of Jupiter Stator arose on the spot, which, rebuilt in the time of Roman great-

* This work is also more peculiarly interesting to an Englishman than other foreign tourists who visit Rome, on account of the connection of its author with the early story of our own country, at a period which the Celtic poems of Ossian have lighted with a glow of wild and singular poetry. Severus, in his invasion of Caledonia, (records of which I fancy I can trace in some additional relieves) suffered many reverses from the bravery of Fingal and his chiefs, and the triumph over the *Caracul, the son of the king of the world*, seems to allude to some partial reverse or retreat of Caracalla, who accompanied Severus in the expedition. Rome possesses the triumphal arch, but Britain the tomb of the stern Roman. He died at York.

† Forsyth has fallen into the vulgar error of imagining it to have been composed of seven orders rising above each other, and that they fell and disappeared in consequence of the great superincumbent weight.



ness, was long supposed to be represented to us by three of its remaining columns. Whether this ruin be the Temple of Jupiter Stator, or part of the Comitia, or a Temple of Castor and Pollux, or whether it should be called the *Disputed Columns*, as proposed by some, is immaterial; suffice to say, it is the most perfect architectural work of Roman art remaining. The union of science in construction, of grace and beauty in design, of richness of material*, and of accuracy and skill in execution, displayed in this work, is unequalled in any other existing morceau. The capitals served modern architects as their standard of the Corinthian order; and their contemplation by the great artists of the middle ages, Brunelleschi, Bramante, and Michael Angelo, caused a sudden revolution in art, unprecedented in its history. Architecture, which had ever gone on adapting itself to wants and circumstances, successfully or otherwise, according to the retrograde or onward steps of civilization, was suddenly made to stop short in its career, and turn back two thousand years. The skill and science which a long succession of gothic genius had brought to the highest perfection, in an original feeling, were both abandoned as it were in a moment; and art was made to recommence its course in copies and adaptations of Roman remains.

Recognising in these wonderful ruins the models and originals of well-known and every-day decorations of our ordinary buildings, is a most pleasing sensation: I can compare it to nothing but reading Shakspeare for the first time, and finding there, as in a mine, hundreds of familiar phrases and powerful turns of expression become proverbial, which in our childhood appeared part of the language itself, but which we find to be the original invention of the humble but immortal playwright.

Before advancing farther I must notice the column erected in honour of the eastern Emperor Phocas, by an exarch of Italy; an eternal monument of the fallacious speculations of antiquaries and archæologists, who had assigned it to almost every temple or building ever recorded as in or near the Forum. All hypotheses were overturned by the simple expedient of excavation; which, commenced under the direction of the French, was completed by the Duchess of Devonshire, who laid bare the base, and discovered it to be a detached honorary column, placed on a pedestal, approached on all sides by steps. Being of too good execution to belong to the fifth century, it is evident that it was taken

* White marble.

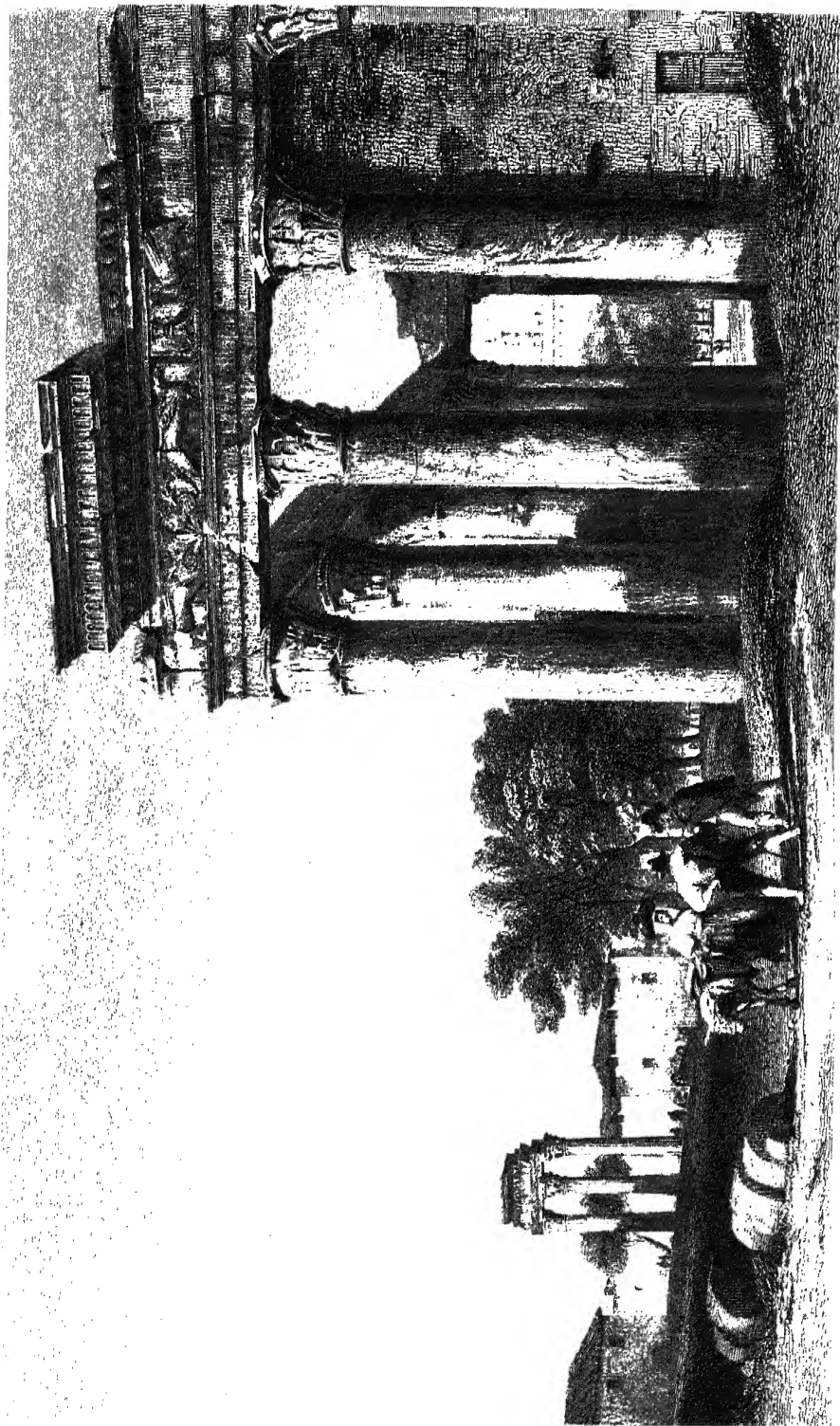
from some ancient building for its new purpose; a course unfortunately too common, after the declension of the arts.

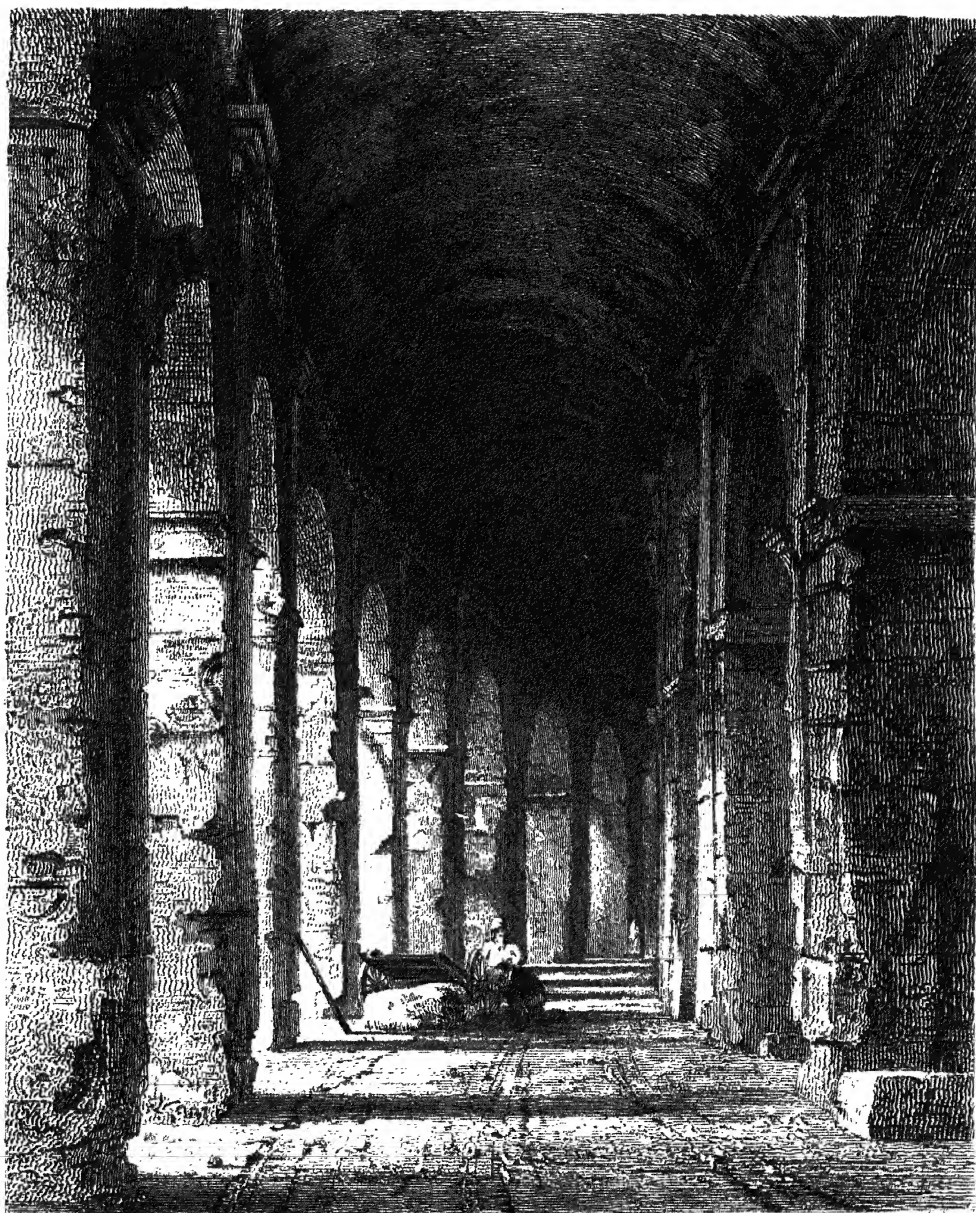
Advancing eastward, the temple of Antoninus and Faustina is seen on the left: its six remaining columns of cippolino are extremely beautiful; but terribly maltreated by those who once used the ruin as an habitation, previous to its adoption as a church. Its frieze is most singular, and beautiful; but too well known to need description. The cornice is of unusual simplicity, which is in my view, a defect in Roman art; but altogether there is a breadth and unity of character about the whole conception, that is not always found in the works of the Antonine period.

Farther on is the triumphal arch of Titus; the most ancient, most interesting, and most beautiful that remains to us. Its erection at a good period of art renders it an interesting work in an artistic point of view, both in regard to its design and execution; and the subject of its elaborate sculptures imparts to it one of a deeper nature. Here is recorded by the Roman chisel, that long-prophecied fall of the doomed Jerusalem; and here, upon these pagan stones, are sculptured as triumphal spoils, the sacred garniture of the temple; the holy instruments of Jewish worship, framed after the precise directions of God himself. The seven-branched golden candlestick*, the tablets, the silver trumpet, the vases of gold, are all accurately represented, born by the victorious worshippers of Jupiter, in front of a long train of the fallen followers of Moses. Then, there is the figure of Titus in his triumphal car, evidently a portrait; and many other circumstances connected with that momentous event, which are deeply interesting. How forcibly these monumental records tell their story; and how much more impressive is their eloquence than the dull characters of books! Opposite to the arch of Titus, on the left, is the Temple of Peace, where these spoils of Jerusalem were deposited; and the vast overhanging masses of the ruin cast the same shadows, at the same hour of the day, athwart the antique pavement, as in the times when these events themselves occurred.

But alterations and additions have encased the original masses, and this ruin is of a totally different character to the others that remain about the Forum and the surrounding region. The columns, which are the principal feature in the other ruins, have disappeared; and vast and massive vaultings, such as eventually became more and more the characteristic of Roman architecture, as it seceded

* The representation of this seven-branched candelabrum once gave the name of *Arcus Septem Lucernarum* to the building.





from the Greek, and formed combinations of its own, are all that remain. The execution of the details is inferior to the general planning and arrangement of parts; which would lead us to believe that this portion of the building was copied from some previous and better work; perhaps the baths of Caracalla, where vast vaultings supported on detached columns were first introduced with good effect as a principal feature; rendering the column and architrave subservient adjuncts, instead of the most striking objects and principal vehicles for ornament. These circumstances lead to the conviction that the existing vaultings of the Temple of Peace formed no part of the original edifice of Vespasian, but are additions, or reconstructions, of a later period; perhaps in the reign of Diocletian, or perhaps, for the details are sufficiently ill executed to warrant the idea, at the time when it is supposed to have been converted to a church by Constantine.

We next meet the vast foundations of the temple of Venus and Rome, a work which claimed Hadrian himself for its architect. This architectural vagary of the artist Emperor was fatal to Apollodorus, who ventured an unwelcome criticism which cost him his life: it was too just to be forgiven.

But we are drawing near the great wonder of Rome: the mighty Coliseum rises before, above us; and we have no appetite for other contemplations. It is a great magnet which draws the interest of all the lesser ones to itself, and in its immensity appropriates exclusively the accumulated feelings which have grown up in the breast of the spectator in his progress through the forum. Its apparent vastness, beyond the reality, is astonishing; and as we retrace over and again its galleries, tier above tier, or wander in the open arena below, our wonder and impression of magnitude continually increase. This effect is one of the great triumphs of art, and in the Coliseum has been the guiding principle of the designer; for detached parts present little of either richness, beauty of design, or accuracy of execution; which latter defect may be attributed to the mode of its erection*; nevertheless, all these comparatively neglected parts blend harmoniously into the most majestic mass that architectural art has ever reared: at night, particularly by moonlight, its effect is overpowering. Byron felt the majestic influence of its almost awful grandeur in his lines:—

———“ When the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air
 The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,

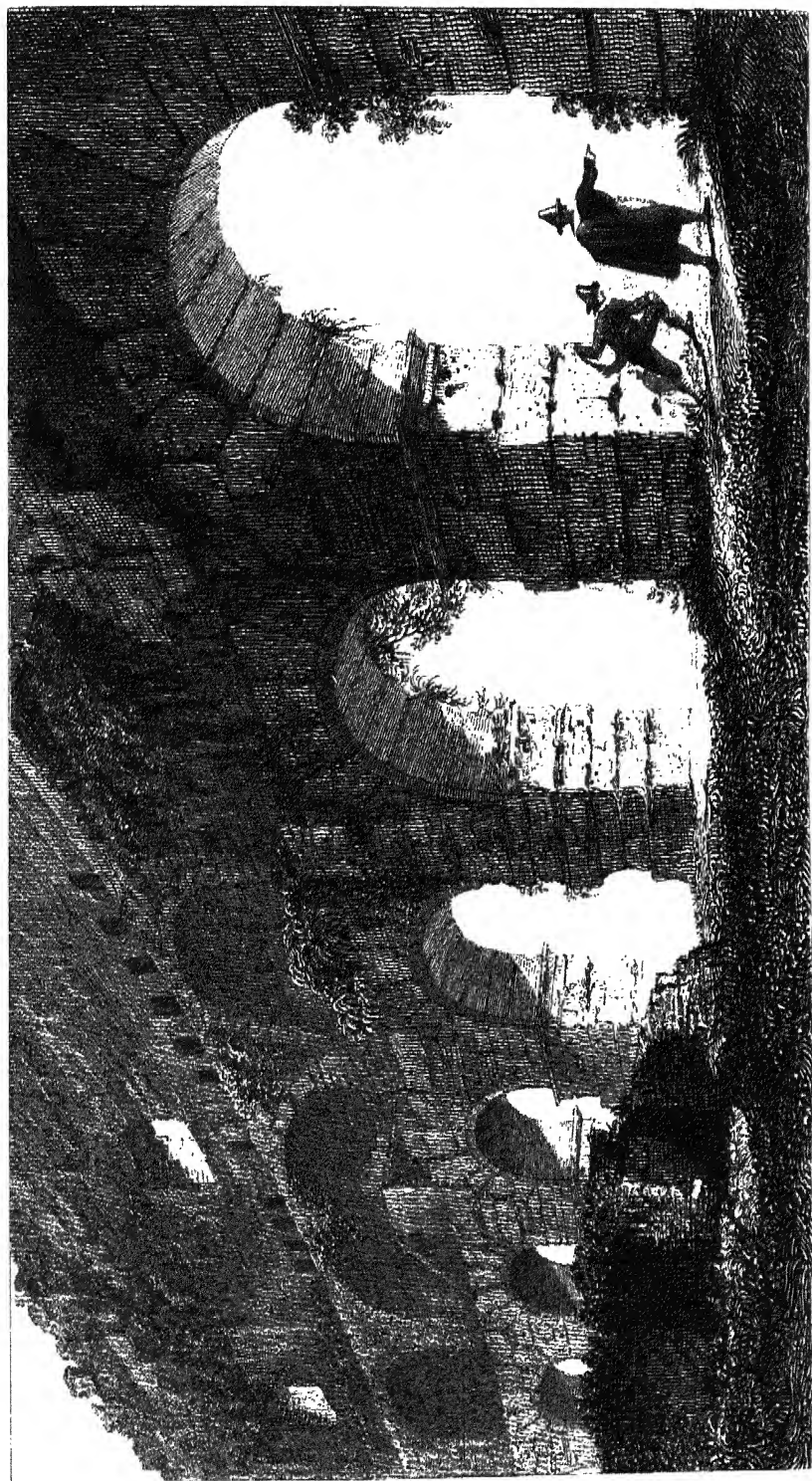
* Built by the labours of 40,000 Jewish prisoners.

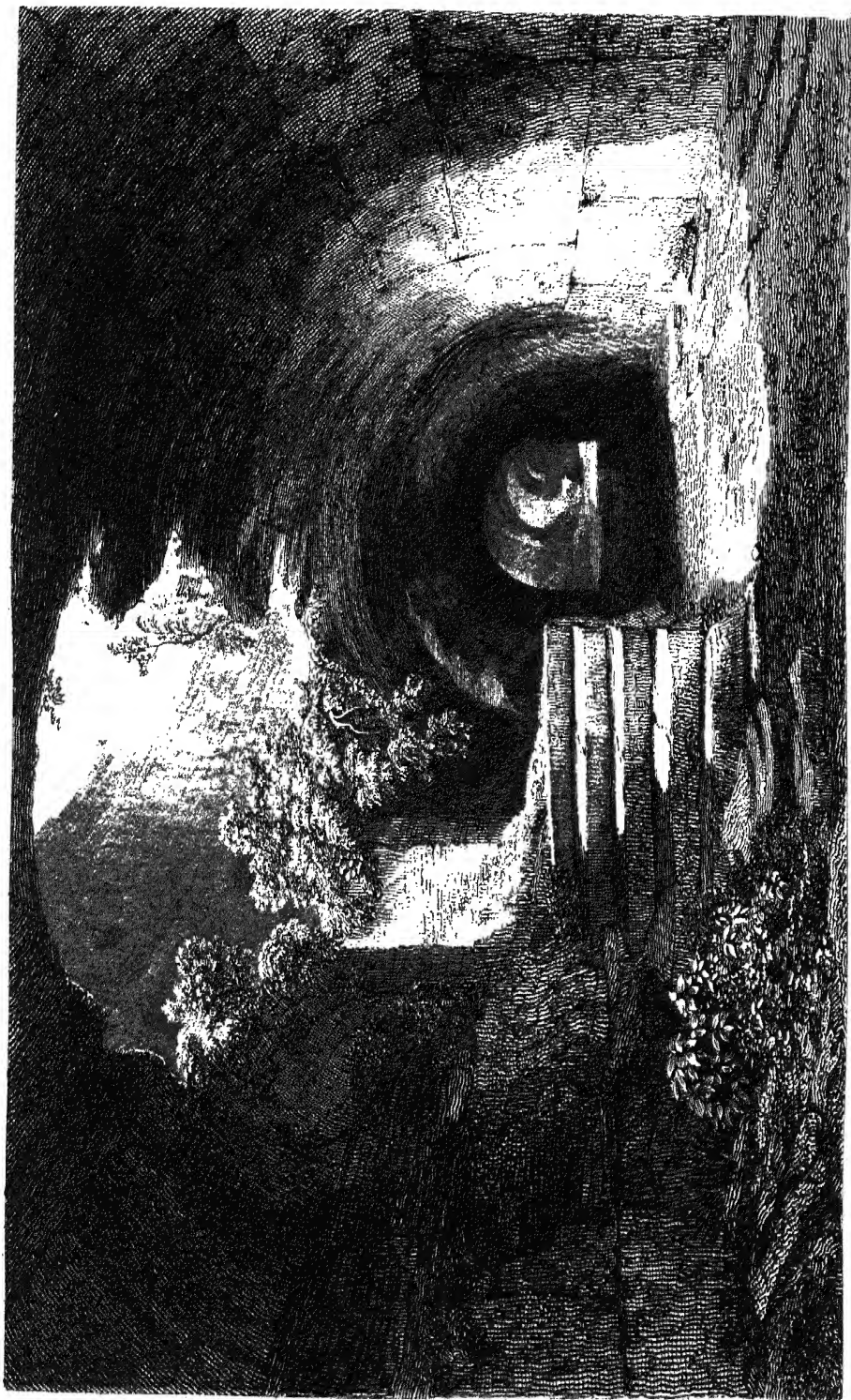
Like laurels on the bold first Cæsar's head ;
 When the light shines serene, but does not glare,
Then in the magic circle raise the dead :
 Heroes have trod this spot ;—'tis on their dust we tread."

This vast amphitheatre was built by Vespasian, about A.D. 80, and was the largest erected in Rome before or since. Its purpose was the exhibition of combats of animals and gladiators, and it was so constructed as also to admit of naval engagements, the arena being contrived in such a manner as to receive a sufficient depth of water to float the small vessels constructed for the purpose. It was capable of receiving many thousand specators*, and the festivities which accompanied its completion surpassed all that the Romans had previously known of such entertainments. Sylla, Pompey, Cæsar, Augustus, had successively exhibited combats of lions and tigers, of bears, elephants, &c., in immense numbers ; but this display outstripped them all, in extent, in novelty—and cruelty. It lasted one hundred days, and upwards of 5000 wild beasts were slain or killed in mutual combat, whilst nearly as many human beings fell in the gladiatorial combats, to grace that "Roman holiday." For three hundred years such sights continued to glut the ferocious pleasures of the Roman people within its walls† ; and fresh excitement was continually sought in strange and wonderful novelties ; the depths of Asia and Africa were ransacked for new animals ; and in the reign of the later emperors, the slaughter of the rhinoceros, the hippopotamus, and even the giraffe, gratified the craving appetite of that savage public for curious cruelty. Dwarfs, and even women, were at one time exhibited in these conflicts ; but this extreme abuse was forbidden by Severus. After the establishment of christianity, by Constantine, gladiatorial conflicts were nominally abolished ; yet such was the predilection of the Roman people for them, that they could not, without fear of a popular sedition, be altogether discontinued. A singular instance of intrepidity and devotion at last put a final stop to them in the fifth century, during the reign of Honorius. The successes of the great Stylicho procured for the emperor the opportunity of a triumph ; and for the last time the imperial chariot rolled triumphant up the sacred way, but a few short months before the fall of Rome. On this occasion there were combats of gladiators, in the amphitheatre of Vespasian, for the last time. An eastern monk named

* Antiquarians state the number at 50,000. The whole building occupies an area of nearly six acres, and its total height is 157 feet. Some suppose its modern name, Coliseum or Colosseum, to be derived from its own gigantic proportions, others from the colossal statue of Nero which formerly stood near.

† Successive thousands of persecuted christians have been slaughtered in the Coliseum, to whose memory it is now consecrated.





Almachius rushed into the arena between the combatants, exclaiming in the name of God against the inhuman butchery : he was slain—but his martyrdom put an end to such displays for ever ; and his name will live as long as that of the Coliseum. At this period, that is, in the fifth century, the building must have been in good condition ; for repairs are recorded by the prefect Lampadius in 430, and additional repairs by the prefect Basil in 480 ; after which period most likely it fell gradually to decay, though it was still, during a considerable period, used for public games. These were, however, eventually discontinued, and slow decay was sapping the stability of the great fabric. It was sufficiently entire on September 2nd, 1332, to be fitted up for the exhibition of a bull fight and a tournament, which the nobles, from as far as Rimini and Ravenna, hastened to attend, and of which an elaborate description is given by a contemporary.

Poggius and Petrarch describe it as entire in their time, but used for vile purposes by the populace, who built workshops in the avenues and galleries ; and it was used as a fortress by the Frangipani and Annibaldi, and injured likewise by the shock of an earthquake. In 1381 great parts of the western side had fallen, and this was the signal for general spoliation.

“ from its mass
Walls, palaces, half cities, have been reared,
Yet oft as the enormous skeleton we pass,
We wonder where the spoil could have appeared.”

Every civil strife was stayed for spoil ; even Guelphs and Ghibbelines made a written compact* not to interfere with each other when they wanted stones from the Coliseum ; and at a later period the Farnesi, Borghesi, and lastly the Barberini, reared their princely halls from this vast quarry ; yet the stupendous mass seems scarcely broken into. A better time gradually arose, when these desecrations were forbidden. Benedict XIV. consecrated the spot where so many Christian martyrs had perished, and eventually, Pius VII. erected immense buttresses of brick, at considerable cost, which will preserve the gigantic relic for many ages.

This wonderful Coliseum is the grand attraction of Rome : travellers visit it again and again during their short stay in a city where every moment has so many demands ; soirées are given within its walls ; but the gay sounds of frivolity harmonize ill with the solemn grandeur of the scene ; and the applause

* The compact, according to the able Barthelemy, is still preserved in the archives of Rome.

from invisible spectators in the dark galleries, which sometimes follows the cessation of the song or symphony, seem a mocking reproach from the shades of its antique crowds. The French in their classic enthusiasm enacted the tragedy of Brutus here, and dragged the celebrated statue of Pompey from the Spada Palace (amputating an arm for the convenience of removal), that Cæsar might actually fall at the feet of the identical statue that nineteen centuries before had been sprinkled with the last blood of Rome.

I have wandered many days among the galleries of this maze of stone, and among the brushwood of its "garland forest," without being half satisfied with its contemplations. Its vast extent affords so many fields of research that almost every cultivated mind may find material for his own peculiar train of thought. To the botanist it is fertile ground; it has a flora of its own*; and many plants are discovered among its ruins that are peculiar to the locality. Shelley, who was a good practical botanist, passed many delightful hours collecting the flowers of the Coliseum. But I must quit the description of the place where I would willingly linger long;—the Arch of Constantine beckons us forward, and we must examine its beautiful sculptures—borrowed plumes from works of an earlier period.

The general composition of this arch, which is good, is evidently copied from some one of its predecessors; perhaps the very one from which the beautiful sculptures were taken for its adornment. All the execution of the architectural details, and of mouldings, &c. &c. that belong to the period of Constantine, are exceedingly bad: a few pieces of sculpture, necessary to match some portion of the more ancient works, still worse—in fact, quite barbarous; for in the representation of the human figure, the artists of the day were more at fault than in mere ornament. It seems most probable that the beautiful bassi and alti-relievi were taken from an arch or arches in the Forum of Trajan, and yet they are of more delicate and finished workmanship than any of the fragments remaining there, even those of the glorious column.

This arch has been closely copied in the one on the Carousel at Paris, and meagrely and imperfectly in the one in front of Buckingham Palace.

It is the last monument in the valley of the Forum; but the Palatine hill remains unexplored;—that hill that served for the city of Romulus, but could not contain the Palace of the Cæsars, whose crumbling remains jut forth among the vines and brushwood with which it is now covered, making the vineyards look like an accidental wilderness of foliage springing in wild profusion from

* Sebastiani, an Italian botanist, has published a "*Flora Colisea*," and enumerates 260 species.

the crevices of ruined walls. The Roman term for an imperial residence, *palatium*, was doubtless derived from the name of this first of the seven hills, which has thus bequeathed the word palace to Europe: but the derivation of its own name is more obscure: some attribute it to Pales, the goddess of sheep, others to Pallas, but both appear to me equally unsatisfactory. The labours of Bianchini, Thon, Ballanti, and others, pretended to give us an accurate plan of every apartment in the palace of which these vast ruins are the melancholy representations: but who that has wandered among them can put the slightest faith in such speculations? Ranges of terraces supported on gigantic piers—vast and splendid vaults to which no apparent means of admitting light existed—intricate and inexplicable passages—arches supporting nothing—all present a mass of ruin and confusion which defies the diligence of the antiquary to unravel. Hyppodromes, temples, baths, are pointed out within the wreck, and with some show of reason; yet all must evidently be but mere conjecture. But the picture has been painted by a master hand that has appropriated the subject to itself. Who shall repaint the transfiguration, after Raphael? or the Sibyl, after Domenichino? or the judgment, after Buonarotti? or the imperial mount, after the eight short lines that tell the tale so briefly, and so well.

“Cypress and ivy, weed and wall-flower grown,
 Matted and massed together, hillocks heaped
 On what were chambers, arch crushed, column strown
 In fragments, choked-up vaults, and frescoes steeped
 In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd
 Deeming it midnight:—temples, baths, or halls?
 Pronounce who can; for all the learn'd have reap'd
 From their research, hath been, that these are walls.”

We are at first struck with the idea of a palace occupying the entire Palatine hill; but in comparison even with works that degenerate modern princes have erected, its magnitude is not so extraordinary. The Vatican itself would occupy full half the space; and the twin Palaces of the Tuilleries and Louvre would surely cover nearly as much ground; whilst the palace designed for Charles the First, by Inigo Jones, would perhaps have exceeded such limits; which we may easily conceive, without reference to the published plans, by considering that the banqueting-house formed but a small and insignificant compartment in the design.

But it is not the idea of mere magnitude that interests on the Palatine, or we might extend the Cæsarian residence across the valley to the Esquiline mount,

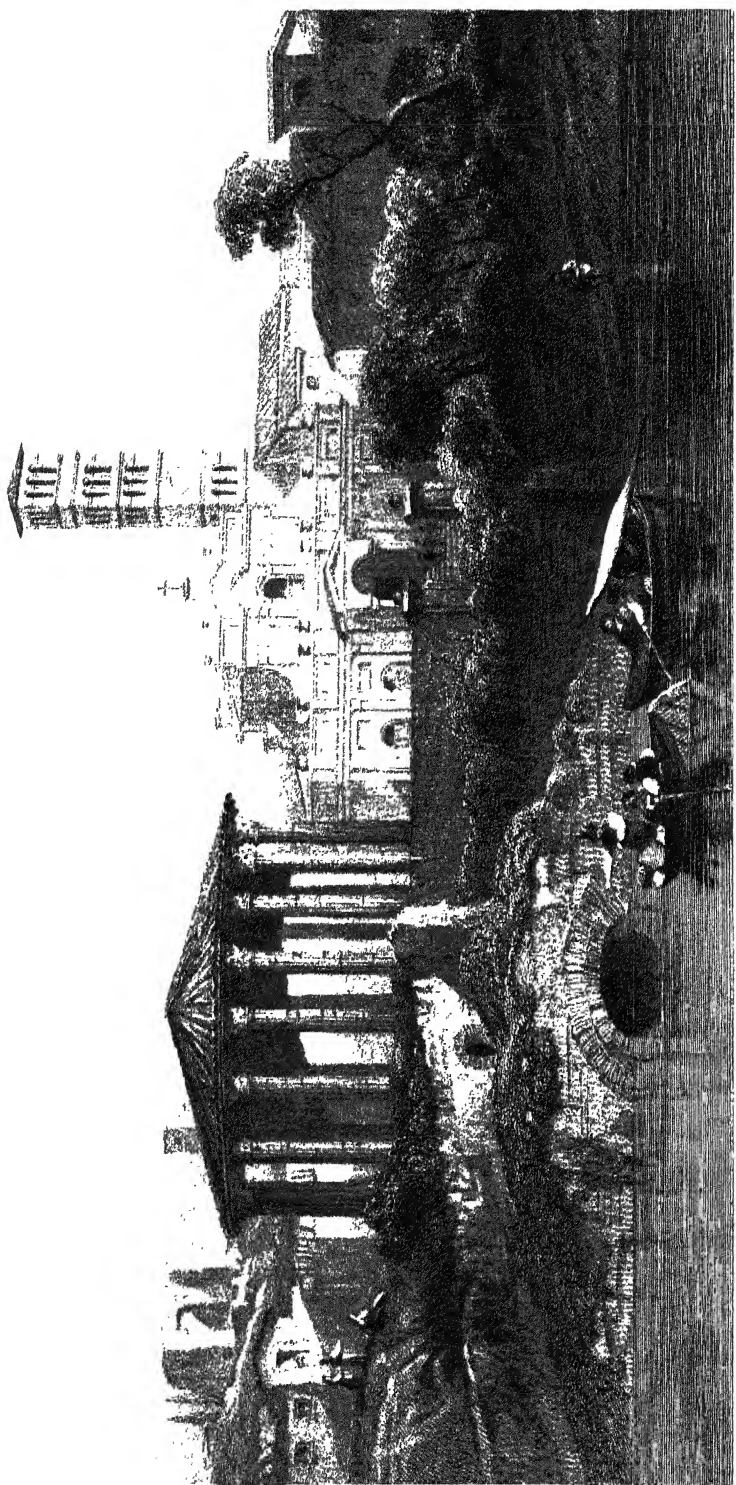
and include another hill in its range, as was contemplated and in part executed by Nero. Neither is it the mere picturesque combinations of form and colour that detain the wanderer among the fragments of these ruined halls; it is the feelings and reflections that involuntarily arise there that rivet him to the spot. It is impossible to tread without emotion those chambers, whose first inmate* occupied them in all their freshness when Christ walked the earth. Those fragments of sculpture and gilding that decorated them were even then in existence. Here lived the man, whose "image and superscription" were upon the coins that passed through *his* mortal hand; and upon the pence that were expended to purchase part of the miraculous feast at which the hungry thousands fed. From hence, a nod, a wave of the hand, influenced the world;—till the excess of luxury, whose glittering fragments we are crushing at every tread, precipitated power abused into the gulf it had itself prepared:

"Behold the imperial mount!—'tis thus the mighty falls."

The tamest imagination is led to rhapsodise on such a spot; and often till the closing twilight has warned me of the hour, have I lingered there.

The Circus Maximus, and a great number of fine and interesting objects, are seen from the Palatine hill; but in a mere note-book how can I attempt to describe them? There are likewise many interesting things in the neighbourhood: the small arch of Severus in one of the lesser *fora*; the arch of Janus; and also another arch at the Porta Sebastiano, that of Drusus. Nearer the Coliseum are a suite of subterranean chambers, known as the baths of Titus; respecting whose history and purpose antiquaries are sadly at variance. In one of the rooms is a niche of a suitable proportion to receive the Laocoon, pointed out to travellers as the place of its discovery, but that group was discovered in the true baths of Titus, which these chambers certainly are not. But the circumstance which has detained me here is connected with the light and elegant paintings with which the walls are decorated: they appear to have been designed by excellent artists, but executed by mere workmen, who seem to have lost some of the meaning of the originals, and in carelessness of execution drawn a few of the lines so as to invert the intended perspective. They are, however, in general, quite superior to ordinary decorative paintings, and possess a deeper attraction than their mere intrinsic excellence, or their antiquity, in having suggested to the

* Augustus built the imperial palace on the Palatine, after the destruction of his own private house by accidental fire.



great artists of the period of the revival those elegant arabesque traceries, which are the wonder of the celebrated loggia of the Vatican, and constitute the crowning elegance of the palaces of that era; whose walls and ceilings are covered with wildly graceful conceptions of the pencil, to which the contemplations of these subterranean chambers gave birth. Here wandered the young and enthusiastic Raphael, whose eye, practised to quick perception of the beautiful, at once appreciated the merit of these antique frescoes, then newly discovered; and saw in them a fresh vista in the regions of fancy opening before him. Here would he escape from the glare and heat of the mid-day sun, and accompanied by the beautiful Fornarina, mingle love with study in this cool retreat—turning, perhaps, oftener towards the bright eyes of the living picture at his side, than to the painted beauties of the walls—

“As those who learn the science of the skies,
Turn oft’ner to the stars than to their book.”

How many more objects crowd upon one in this enchanted region, where each is so interwoven with the name or the deeds of “the glorious dead,” that to mention the cold stone without its vivifying legend is impossible; and yet, barely to hint at such associations, would occupy all the remaining space of my narrow note-book. Antiquaries and guides profess to lead you the tour of all the greater and lesser lions of Rome in eight days, explaining every thing that is necessary; and several English tourists boast of having beaten the antiquaries; *doing* it well in five. But weeks, months, years, would not suffice to exhaust the materials for wonder and excitement one stumbles over in every foot of this prolific soil. The ancient level of the Forum, and the greater portion of the southern division of Rome, is buried beneath ten or twelve feet of crumbled ruins; the dust of the vast body, whose skeleton here and there appears in the Coliseum, the columns of Jupiter Stator, or the substructions of the Capitol. This soil of crumbled marbles has not been half explored; and yet the temptations to do so are sufficient. Scarcely an excavation is made without the discovery of a statue, a column of jasper, or blocks of some costly material, to repay the labour.

Leaving this spot, and turning towards the river, the Tiber, are two other ruins worthy of particular attention; these are the (so called) Temples of Vesta and Fortuna Virilis. The first has evidently been a very beautiful work, and appears to belong to a period prior to the reign of Augustus; probably, not far from that of the Temple at Tivoli, which it resembles, not only in its circular form

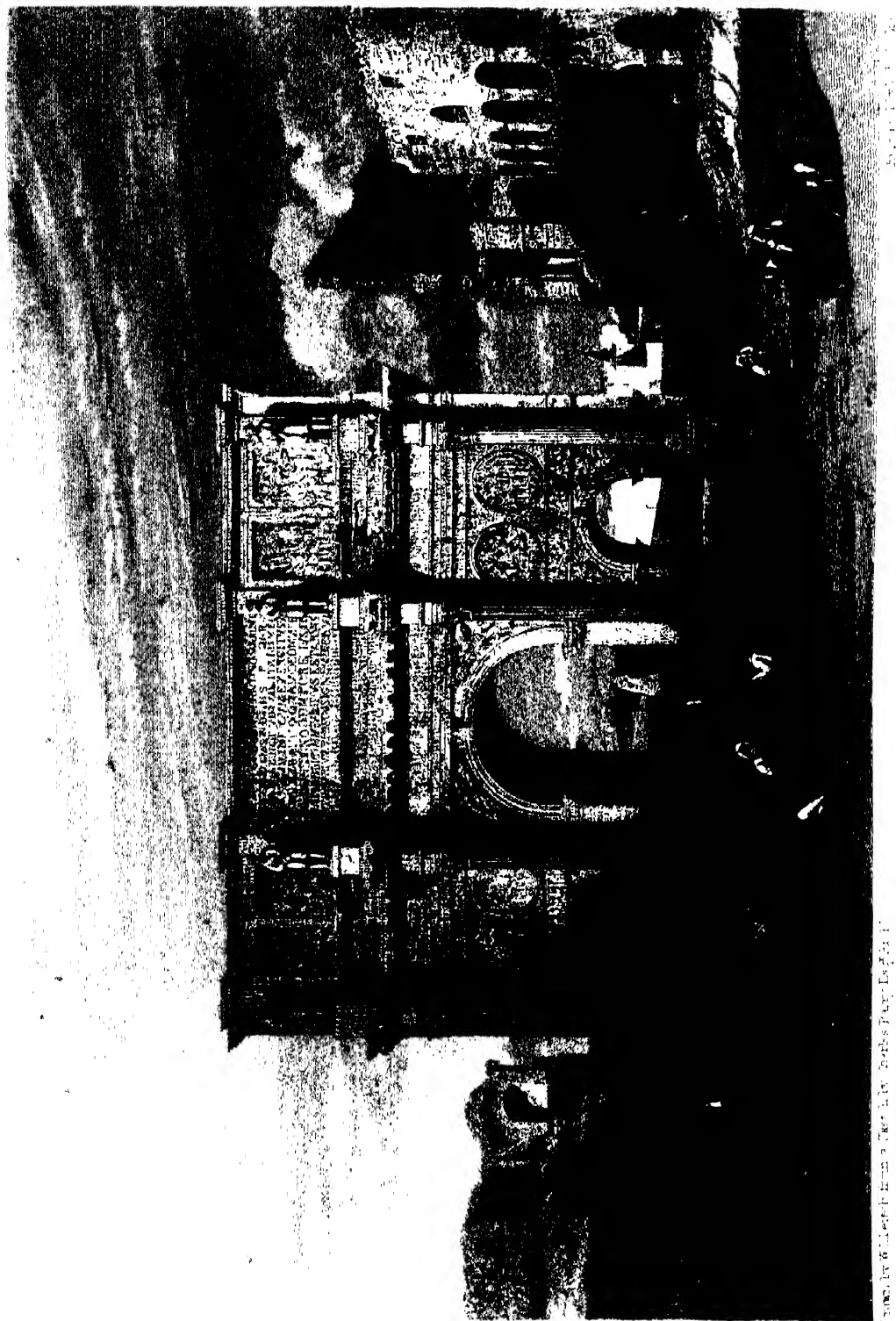
but in some of the details. It consisted originally of a small circular cell, surrounded by twenty-eight Corinthian columns of white marble; but the entablature is entirely gone, and several of the columns. The Temple of Fortuna Virilis has been much injured by restoration to adapt it to a church, but I doubt if it ever was a first-rate work: nevertheless, it was the first, and for a long time the only model for the Ionic order; until the publication of the beautiful remains in Asia Minor proved that the Greeks alone had properly understood its graceful treatment.

Near this spot is the house of Cola di Rienzi, whose "*spirito gentil*" early appreciated the beauties of ancient art, and we see in his house the antique fragments, which perhaps came to light in digging its foundation, *not* turned with the work inward, in order to preserve the smooth surface of the building, as was usual at the time, but ostentatiously displayed in prominent parts of the building as objects worthy of observation.

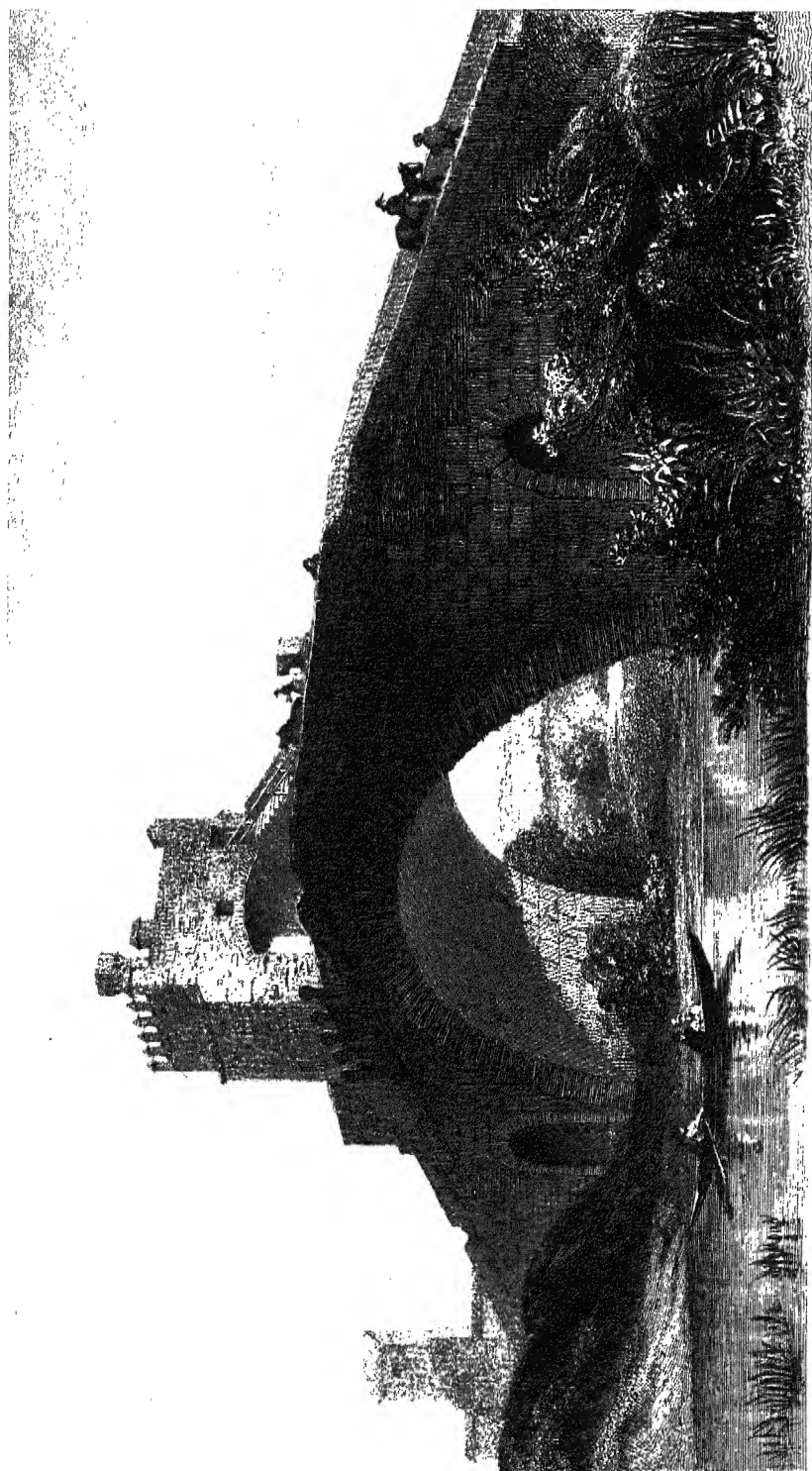
The ancient stream flows near which witnessed the past greatness of Rome, as well as her modern degradation; but her antique bridges no longer span her yellow waters. The wooden bridge of Horatius Cocles, and the stone ones which succeeded it, have disappeared; with the exception of some remnants of massive brick piers of the former, which may be seen when the water is low. Even those rude remains are interesting, on account of having originated the title of *Pontiff*, from the circumstance of the high priests being endowed with the sole direction of the repair or re-construction of this, then the only bridge of Rome, after the great event which had so strikingly manifested its importance.

The *Ponte Rotto* occupies the place of the Pons Palatinus, and among the ancient ruins of Rome is a novelty, for it is a modern one. The original bridge, which had fallen to decay, was replaced in 1546 by a new one, which however was soon destroyed by an inundation; and the one which again replaced it under Gregory XIII. in 1598, shared the fate of its predecessor, and forms the present picturesque ruin. Looking from hence, either towards the island of the Tiber, or towards Ripa Grande and the Apennines, the general views are most picturesque—perhaps two of the most variously beautiful in Rome.

The bridges which connect the island of the Tiber with either shore, like the Pont Neuf at Paris, contain a large portion of the ancient masonry, with many interesting inscriptions; but the next, the Ponte Sisto, though built upon the piers of the Pons Janiculensis, is entirely modern, as is the Ponte St. Angelo, though no actual rebuilding is recorded. Yet it is now very unlike the bridge described as having been built by Hadrian, as an approach to his splendid



View of the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, London, England



mausoleum; whose solid circle of masonry still firmly stands beneath the ruder battlements which have transformed it into the castle of St. Angelo.

The Ponte Molle, which I passed on my first entrance to Rome, possesses but little of its purely ancient work, and the single-arched Ponte Salaro, which spans the Anio, a short distance before it falls into the Tiber, is perhaps the most ancient bridge about Rome; its most recent restoration of any extent being that of the Exarch Narses, whose somewhat grotesque additions still remain nearly perfect.

I would now quit the subject of ruins; but how can I do so without noticing the wondrous baths, perhaps the greatest monuments of Roman refinement, where thousands could be gratuitously accommodated at one time in separate apartments, with all the luxuries of the bath, administered with such magnificence as the most profuse expenditure could produce? The precious metals, and the richest marbles, were used with the utmost prodigality in the accessories and utensils of these famous baths; and to the mere physical gratification of the bathing room were added the intellectual pleasures to be derived from the contemplation of the most noble works of art, collected in superb galleries; or among the books of libraries, where luxurious couches, and silence, disturbed but by the cooling murmur of gently playing fountains, invited to agreeable study. But of all this splendour little remains: of the great baths of Diocletian nothing is left but two circular buildings with pannelled ceilings, somewhat resembling in miniature the Pantheon—one used as a church, the other as a granary, and the great hall, whose stupendous granite columns, above six feet in diameter, and of one entire block, are still erect. This hall has been adapted to church for the Carthusian convent, with much grandeur of conception, by Michael Angelo.

The other portions of the vast ruins have been concealed, destroyed, or used by the convent which has sprang up among them, whose cloisters, though built by Buonarrotti, but poorly replace what they have destroyed. Yet it is a spot worth a visit, if but to look at the gigantic cypresses in the centre of the court, which would give solemnity and grandeur to any scene. Such is all that remains of a monument that cost the labour of 7000 Christian slaves seven years to erect, whilst near 5000 died in the works.

The baths of Constantine, or the Temple of the Sun, or the female Senate Elagabalus, or whatever else the ruins may really be, possess but little interest to the general observer. Nor do the relics of the baths of Agrippa at the back of the Pantheon; but the baths of Caracalla, in their majestic ruins, form a picture that few can look upon without emotion: its vast hanging masses appear

as mountains, forming glades between, whose flower-studded turf is soft and sweet to tread, for the wild thyme and odoriferous flowers exhale perfumes as they are pressed. The soft air of Italy's delicious climate seems still softer there, and the deep blue sky looks brightly down through "the dizzy arches." The tints of the ruin are of rich and glowing colours, and their wild forms cut sharply against their azure background; yet the general character is that of deep solemnity. Here it was that the enthusiastic Shelley loved to lie stretched on the fragment turf for hours in wrapped abstraction, dreaming into being his wonderful Prometheus*.

The obelisks convey a grand idea of the power and perseverance of the Romans. After Augustus had reduced Egypt to the situation of a Roman province, her great works of art were continually transported to Italy, to adorn the capital; even the size of the obelisks did not prevent their removal; and when we consider the small size of the Roman ships, and their comparatively imperfect mechanical knowledge, we must wonder at the persevering determination which transported those enormous masses across the Mediterranean; and all without a boast; whilst the transport of an obelisk to Paris, and its erection there, has recently turned the heads of the Parisians, as one of the wonders of the world. Twelve of these vast masses of granite found their way to Rome, the largest of which is 99 feet high. It was removed from its original pedestal by Constantine, with the intention of rearing it in his new Thracian capital, but his death prevented the fulfilment of the design, and his son Constans brought it to Rome, and erected it in the Circus Maximus, opposite one of nearly equal size which had been placed there by Augustus. These were both eventually buried in the ruins of the Circus Maximus, where they remained hidden and broken till Sixtus V. disinterred them, and placed one opposite the St. Giovanni Laterano, and the other on the Piazza del Popolo. He likewise caused the one now in front of St. Peter's to be extracted from a mass of ruins in which it lay, and erected in its present position. It is the only one that remains entire, forming one unbroken shaft of seventy-eight feet in length.

Torlonia, the rich banker, is just now emulating the Rhamses's, the Augustus', and the Sisto's—he has caused two obelisks to be cut from the quarries on the Lago Maggiore, which, traversing the Po to the Adriatic, have made nearly the circuit of Italy. They safely entered the Tiber, and being landed at the Ponte Nomentana, were erected at his villa near the Porta Salaria. They are above

* The "Prometheus Unbound" was written almost entirely among the ruins of the baths of Caracalla.

thirty feet high. Rome has again seen the arrival of an obelisk after the lapse of fourteen hundred years.

After all the wonderful remains of Roman greatness, I mention that last which should perhaps have stood first. The wonderful sewerage of the Tarquins is still as perfect as when constructed. The Cloaca Maxima is the most gigantic work of those Romans—they never surpassed in true greatness the gigantic efforts of their early energy. This Etruscan monument is highly interesting, as being the earliest known application of the arch; and here we see the type of that architecture, which in the great days of the republic and the empire, uniting itself with the imported style of Greece, formed the most grandiose and imposing combination that the history of the art can record.

CHAPTER VI.

OPERA, THEATRES, AND MUSIC.

IN Italy, the land of music-operas and opera singers, an amateur is always anxious on arriving in a town to know whether its opera is in a state of activity ; and whether or not a tolerably efficient company is mustered. But with the exception of Milan and Naples, operas are poorly got up, excepting at the Carnival, when most of the principal towns manage to enlist a tolerable set of voices. This season is indeed the harvest time of soprane, contralte, tenore, and bassi ; even third-rates, of any of the above denominations, then assume a consequence which (having so little opportunity of indulging in), sits as awkwardly upon them as the Sunday-suit of a mechanic, or a sword upon a citizen. They can now answer managers' invites, with, " Very sorry"—previous engagements, &c. &c. ; and as antiquarians have declared the carnival to be but a relic, or rather a continuation of the saturnalia of the ancients, when servants played the masters, during the reign of misrule, so the manager, a hard master enough in the *slack* season, is now obliged to bow to the buffo, cringe to the primo basso, be content to accept any terms from his tenore, and as for the prima donna, why he is a fortunate man if he gets one at all ; and then she will sing in no operas but those of her own selection, and in no parts where she may not interpolate her own peculiar bravura. Thus the pleasures and pains of life find their equilibrium, and the paradise of the singer becomes the purgatory of the manager.

When I arrived at Rome, in November, the principal opera was closed, and would, as may be imagined by what I said above, not open until the Carnival*. But at the secondary opera, the *Teatro Valle*, they were performing, with a tolerable company, alternate plays and operas ; for it would seem that Rome, the birth-place, and the scene of the triumphs of Metastasio, is not sufficiently

* The church has its fictions as well as the law, and Rome is *supposed* to have no theatres, though they actually form a source of revenue to the Papal treasury. The establishments are however not openly acknowledged by the authorities, and are *supposed* to continue the exhibitions *sub rosa*.

musical to support an opera only, whilst at Naples I counted play-bills announcing no less than seven operas at seven different theatres for the same night. Soon after my arrival in the eternal city, I found an opera announced which I had never heard of before, entitled *Chi dura vince*: this, the announcement went on to state, was the *capo d'opera dal Egregio Maestro Luigi Ricci*; and as I had never heard any work of this egregious master, I determined to go. The Teatro Valle is situated in a close and rather dirty part of Rome, behind the Pantheon, and the entrance is bad. The interior is however rather handsome, and nearly as large as Drury Lane or Covent Garden. It is the property of the Marchesi Capranica; and indeed most of the theatres in Rome are the property of some individual, and not, as in our country, of companies, divided into some thousand shares at so many pounds each. On paying ten-pence for entrance, (the pit at an Italian opera, ten-pence!) I received a ticket bearing the number of my seat; but I took very little notice of this, as I intended to stand, and move about as I thought proper; but this plan I soon found was against the regulations of the house, for I was directed by a *custodé* to take my place—*prendere posto*. This I attempted to do, but found it not so easy a matter; for taking a seat numbered 7, in correspondence with my ticket, I was soon politely requested to move, by a gentleman who held me out his own ticket as his warrant. Of this I took no notice, but called the *custodé*, who immediately decided against me, and as he motioned me forward, I examined the next row, and actually found another No. 7. Concluding that I must have been mistaken in the first number, I quietly seated myself, and began to take a survey of the fine Italian heads that one by one, or two by two, began to grace the front rows of the *palchi*—or *boxes*, as we more *elegantly* term them. I was soon, however, interrupted in my agreeable review, by another claimant for No. 7. This would not do; I determined to make a stand; again summoned the *custodé*, and demanded an explanation, which was much more satisfactory than I expected. It appeared that every row had its No. 7, but that this need not cause confusion, if I would refer to my ticket; which I found upon examination explained every thing—*No. 7, row 14, right-hand division*. It was very clear, and yet I was obliged to get the *custodé* to pilot me to my station, where, being at last comfortably seated, I began to reflect upon the advantages and disadvantages of numbering seats. I believe I decided in favour of numbers, but against a plurality of number sevens. Where the numbering system is used, you can, when you have paid your money, make sure of a seat; but in England, where we have no numbers, they squeeze in as many as will go, and never announce “pit full” until some half dozen women

have fainted, and some score determined old gentlemen have demanded their money again at the doors. Whilst on the system of numbers, when the last is disposed of, they can sell no more, and the theatre is not stuffed with a greater number than it can conveniently accommodate. By the time I had thus, like Robinson Crusoe, made up my balance of good and evil, there was heard the wished-for bustle in the orchestra.

In describing an Italian opera in Italy, one ought to be particular. The double bass groaned out its A, the dreadful "note of preparation;" the fiddles screwed up and screwed down, with sounds like the spirit of the cat complaining in the gut; the shrill fife and deep clarionet discordantly screamed their converging A, and at last, joining all in loud unison, the desired concord was consummated. There was a silence; the bow of the leader tabbered briskly against the tin shade of his lamp; the conductor raised his baton, then waved it to the right, then to the left, then down,—crash!—off they go, and a fine start! The jockey delights at the St. Leger, or Derby, to see a field of the finest horses in the world go off compactly, so, (as he expresses it) that you might cover them all with a blanket: but what is his delight to the madness of the musical *fanatico*, at the fair start of thirty fiddles, six basses, four trombones, three flutes, two clarionets, five tenors, and the great drum; well kept together by a pair of cymbals or a gong. No doubt both are very fine to some—very indifferent to others; from which cool truism I was roused by finding the continuation of the overture very different to the start; and by the time it was concluded, my estimation of the *Egregio Maestro Luigi Ricci* had sunk below par. "The curtain rose," as theatrical critics say, and a lady and gentleman, attired in the height of Parisian fashion, advanced to the lights. *Come sta, la Signora Contessa*, politely asked the beau, with a shrug, in good plain common speech; *Benone*, was the cordial reply in the same style. But this is not singing, I said, addressing my neighbour: oh no, *e la prosa*. An Italian opera, partly in prose dialogue, with music introduced, in our English manner, thought I: but no; the dialogue continued, the plot thickened, and not a chord, not a note; and at last, though I could understand no dénouement, the curtain fell, which gave me time to interrogate my neighbour again. By the *prose* I found I was to understand the comedy, which it appeared commenced before the opera. After some delay the true overture to the opera commenced, which went off well, and the piece opened with a very fair chorus; but the best *morceaux* in the first act were a terzetto and a comic duet, both very well executed. The prima donna was a German, Adeline Speck, a pretty woman, a good actress, and possessing a fine voice, but not much execution; and in attempting too many

roulades in the Persiani school, she sometimes failed. Full half the principal female singers now in Italy are Germans : when I heard her name I asked if she was not a German ; *sicuro* was the reply—as though it were absurd to imagine that a prima donna of the day could be anything else. The tenore was a stout little man with a round face, and disgustingly fat, puggy-looking hands. He was even worse than Rubini as an actor, but possessed a fine voice, without very fine feeling ; and like Byron's baritone, could, in default of sentiment, at all events display his teeth.

Soon after the termination of the first act, the curtain, to my great astonishment, again discovered as it rose, my old friends the French beau and the Signora Contessa. It was the second act of the comedy, which I had supposed finished ; after which we had the second act of the opera ; which was again succeeded by another scrap of the comedy, the third and concluding act. This is a singular mode of dividing the amusements of the evening ; but it is a method never departed from at the *Teatro Valle*. Even when they were getting up Spontini's *La Vestale*, in five acts, if they gave a comedy of Goldini's, which might be in five acts likewise, they gave alternate acts of each until the whole was gotten through. If it was feared that deep attention to a continued story might become too exciting, this was certainly a most happy invention ; neutralizing at once the interest by division. I afterwards saw *Norma* performed at this theatre, under the title of *La Foresta d'Irminsul*, mixed up in the same way with a translation of a bagatelle of Scribe's ; for nothing in the way of comedy suits the present taste in Rome but translations from the French. It is the same at Vienna and Berlin, and we know too well that it is so in London. There is a certain point and cleverness in the character of the French peculiarly fitted for the composition of works of the light drama ; but in its higher walks, England may hope to compete with success, provided proper protection is afforded to dramatic compositions ; such, I mean, as would induce men of genius to enter the lists, and drive forth from the home of Shakspeare the puny race of adapters, translators, plagiarists, and literary hacks, who have now, with few exceptions, got possession of the stage. Gioachino David sung the tenor part in *Norma* superbly, and Adeline Speck played the heroine quite in the *Pasta gusto*. They also got up Pacini's *Gli Arabi nelle Gallie* ; and Ricci's *Clara di Rosenberg* ; with which last they closed their *Ottobre* season as it is called, and for which they could never afford to mount so good a company, were it not for the support of English and other strangers, who arrive in shoals about September and October, to pass the winter in Rome.

The next theatre I visited was the Teatro Fiano, under the Palazzo Fiano, in the Corso; this is a *spettacolo* said to be *molto gradito dai Romani*; and consists in the performance of *burattini*, or marionettes, which are really played with much grace and art; and which, with the dialogue entirely extempore, appeared to give the highest delight to the audience, principally Roman, who laugh most heartily at the piquant *concetti*. These little figures are made to utter in a feigned voice something like the dialogue of Punch; but I must allow it to be very superior. One cannot help envying the happy otiose people, that can so easily make two or three otherwise perhaps dull hours, hours of cheerful enjoyment, by driving to the Fiano; where the entertainment generally consists of a comedietta and a ballo. This theatre, purely national, is always well attended.

The *Teatro Argentina* was, before Torlonia rebuilt the Teatro Apollo, the opera regia, and is perhaps the handsomest in Rome; though the interior is now old and faded. It is used generally for pieces where space is required—in fact, a sort of “Astley’s”; although tragedies are sometimes represented, particularly such as require a good display of “pomp and circumstance.”

At the *Teatro Pace* and the *Capranica*, the performances are of a secondary order; light dramas and farces, and the admissions extremely low; adapted to the class of audience the pieces attract. Some of the seats are little more than one penny.

The mausoleum of Augustus, whose circular wall is still partially erect, serves as a modern amphitheatre, and bull fights, equestrian exercises, and other similar exhibitions, take place there during the summer months.

The Pallacordia is, however, a theatre which though somewhat of the same class, I must mention separately. It is an old theatre, and like the *Pace*, and all theatres of the seventeenth century, extremely narrow and deep. There may be seen a relic of the old Italian farce, in the original *Stenterello*, a most amusing being, the Pulicinello of the Tuscan and Roman states; and so much is this character enjoyed by the lower orders, that very high salaries are paid to a good representative. *Stenterello* is quite a different character to his kinsman of Naples; he has not the courage and pugnacity of Punch, but he has more learning; he has not his broad satire, but greater mimicry; he has not so great a flow of language, but then he quotes Metastasio; he is indeed a fool lathered over with learning. Then what he fails to express in words, he amply explains in *geste*. In short, with *Stenterello*, attitude, attitude, though not every thing, is a very great matter. The velocity of his movements, and rapid changes of position, make his by-play; and what could not exactly be committed to words, is

expressed by excellent evolutions. Adroitness in this species of pantomime constitutes the perfection of a *Stenterello*. Then, unlike Punch again, he is still a bachelor ; though ever paying his devoirs to the fair. There is yet in vogue a certain style of piece which would not be complete without *Stenterello* ; although he has no written part. But it is only at the Pallacordia that this relic of the old Italian comedy is preserved.

There alone are performed such pieces as *I Trasteverini in discordia, con Stenterello affanato di se stesso. Un pranzo a Ostia, con Stenterello amatore delle belle Arti, &c. &c.* ; in which pieces he finds his own place ; and, whenever he is on the stage, if a good *Stenterello*, never fails to keep his audience in (what the orthodox play-bills style) a roar of laughter. Indeed, his diletantteism in the latter piece is as fine a piece of broad caricature upon the Eustaces and Colt Hoares of art, as can be conceived. I know nothing richer, except, perhaps, two or three scenes in Sir Walter Scott's inimitable Antiquary. In France they had Pierrot, in England we had Pantaloon, both scions from the noble stock of *Stenterello*. In the early drama it was found, no doubt, of some advantage to have an acknowledged and marked character to introduce as an old friend in every new piece ; to do the wise saws, the moral, or the ridiculous, as the case required ; like *le Marquis*, in the French comedy of the age of Moliere. What would the "*précieuses ridicules*" be without the Marquis ? yet he is only the Marquis of a thousand other pieces of that date ; but on that account received with greater *gusto* as an old friend. We all know what a conventional character has to do, and can appreciate his endeavours accordingly. But the romantic school has swept away all relics of the olden drama in England and France, and will soon do the same in Italy, where its last scintillations are now expiring.

After the *feste* of Christmas, the Opera Regia was opened for the Carnival season, with a brilliant list of soprane, constralte, tenore, and bassi ; and a stock of six operas, and four entirely new ballets. The list of performers, even to those of the orchestra, properly classed, was circulated throughout Rome ; as well as the list of pieces to be performed during the season ; and if promises mean anything, we seemed likely to have a good winter opera. Torlonia—prince, duke, banker, commission agent, and proprietor of the Teatro Apollo—certainly understands the art of puffing. Our announcements in the Haymarket are nothing in comparison ; the list contained three prima donnas, and the rest of the fare to correspond. The only objection was, that there was not one name of which I had ever heard before. Whatever their intrinsic merit, it had apparently hitherto been wasted "on the desert air ;" at all events, fame had, as yet, said nothing about them.

But as most of the operas announced were works which I had not heard, I looked forward to the carnival season of the Teatro Apollo as a musical treat, and was there on the first night to witness Donizetti's *Parisina*. The theatre is large and handsome ; it was well filled ; and many English visitors were present. Here we commenced at once with the overture and the opera ; no *prosa*, as at the Valle. There is in all Donizetti's compositions some very pretty music ; but the style throughout *Parisina* is but a remodel of *Anna Bolena*, and much more feeble ; at all events, as enacted here. Perhaps we are spoiled with our annual combination of Rubini, Grisi, Lablache, and Tamburini. What music of a similar character could stand a chance in comparison ? Nothing of a living composer, got up in a secondary style, will bear listening to after it, except, perhaps, some favourite work of the ever-attractive Rossini. Putting these considerations out of the case, I am inclined to think that *Parisina* is very inferior to *Anna Bolena*, Donizetti's best work. Bellini composed *Il Pirata* and *Norma* ; Meyerbeer, *Il Crociato* and *Robert the Devil* ; Donizetti, *Anna Bolena* ; and they seem to be incapable of more : they each worked out one first happy idea, and then were exhausted. Rossini alone can be called the great operatic genius of the age ; and, like all true genius, how prolific ! Look at the pile of his operas, from *Il Barbiere* to *Guillaume Tell*—one continued triumph. But to return : I was, on the whole, pleased with the performance of *Parisina*. Madame Ungher, a German, sang the principal part with great elegance and feeling, but then she had no voice ;—a prima donna, and a popular one too, without a voice ! The tenor, Signor something or other, had a superb organ, but no taste or feeling. When he poured forth his first note, a magnificent chest G, it rang through the house like a silver bell : I was astonished ; but ere he had completed the first phrase of recitation, it was quite clear that the case stood thus : "*vox et preterea nihil.*" The basso cantante had a tolerably rich tone, but no ear, and was constantly singing a quarter of a tone flat ; which in the concerted pieces produced an effect rather too chromatic and germanesque for ordinary ears.

Between the acts we had a divertimento ; there was some very fair dancing, but nothing to astonish : the primo ballerino was an active fellow, but a bony and ugly figure ; and the ballerina, though announced as *di scuola francese*, was nearly as heavy as Italians generally are in dancing. In private I think the Italians the least graceful dancers in Europe, and they are not fond of it ; they like the language of the eyes better than that of the heels ; and leave the latter to the French, who, however, are by no means novices in the former.

After the opera, commenced the ballet—*Ezzelino sotto le mura di Bassano* ; a

tragic ballet, in five acts ! A ballet in the Haymarket, or at the *Académie Royale de Musique*, gives no idea of a ballet in Italy. In the first place, there is here no dancing ! in the second place—but, in short, an Italian ballet is a tragedy in action. The principal performer is called, I think, a *ballomimico*, but am not sure of the term. Of the performance of this personage, those who can remember John Kemble at one of the *O. P. rons*, when action alone was apparent in the din, can form some idea. The plot was as follows :—A young count of Bassano is enamoured of a beautiful maiden of a noble family, but has a rival in Ezzelino ; and long meetings of lovers, and unexpected meetings of rivals, are acted in soft or furious dumb show, as the occasion may require, but all with great impetuosity and rapidity of motion. Between the first and fourth act the contended lady is carried off, and recovered, under seemingly appalling circumstances, no less than four times. At last, in the fifth act, Ezzelino, as a *dernier ressort*, besieges Bassano ; but this does not prevent the marriage of the lovers ; who, although turrets and steeples are tumbling about as thick as hail, beneath the effects of the battering-rams, proceed coolly with the pompous ceremony. Ezzelino, finding they are so determined (and, moreover, it being necessary to make a tragedy), contrives to introduce an assassin, who, at the moment that the priest is uniting the hands of the lovers, stabs the Count to the heart. The next thing is a truce, during which the body of the Count is brought out and placed in the cemetery, which is without the walls ; and after the portcullis of the town has closed upon the returning procession, two figures remain behind, they are—the widowed maid and her page. The page raises the massive stone-lid of the sarcophagus, props it up with a wedge, and leaves his mistress to her sorrow. She falls to pray over the body of her dead lover, which is exposed in the half-open tomb ; but at this moment the treacherous Ezzelino, in defiance of the truce, is seen approaching over a bridge, across a cascade that dashes beneath the walls of the town ; he dismounts, and rushes towards his victim ; but she, suddenly perceiving his purpose, is just in time to knock away the wedge that supports the massive lid of the sarcophagus, which falls “with hideous ruin and confusion down,” mashing her head to the very shoulders, and leaving her sticking, as it were, in a gigantic mousetrap ! The noise of the fall arouses the citizens, who now man the walls with all the disposable “force of the house,” scene-shifters included, and a terrific fire is poured upon the devoted head of Ezzelino. Cannon, matchlocks, arquebusses, cross-bows, long-bows, &c. &c. pour their pitiless hail upon the devoted victim. But as it is not designed that he should yet fall, he escapes unhurt ; and mounting his white steed, in defiance of a host who have rushed out and surrounded him,

he gallops through the midst of them, and gains the bridge. But here his luck deserts him, at the precise moment contrived by the *maestro di ballo*. The cataract roars louder than ever—that is to say, the rollers of silver tissue which compose it whirl round with double their previous velocity; and, when the persecuted Ezzelino has just gained the middle of the bridge, a cannon-shot adroitly severs the main timbers, and—down he goes, horse and all, into a gulf of white satin and spangles, representing, with awful truth, the foam of a cascade. Thus perished the proud Ezzelino, *sotto le mura di Bassano*. The denouement was received with loud acclamations; and Ezzelino was led forward, like a first-rate tragedian, to receive the thunders of a delighted audience.

Speaking of this tragic ballet reminds me of a comic one upon the same principle which I saw at Florence. The last day I spent there I determined to devote to an opera, and the principal theatre being closed, went to the secondary establishment; an account of the performance at which I extract from a journal I kept during my residence in that city,

At a sort of minor opera I heard Mercadante's *Eliza e Claudio*. The admission to the pit was threepence, English, and this is not a low price for Florence, for at the grand ope a the admission is but little more than treble that sum; however, as I was offered by the venders of tickets (who throng the doors of all foreign theatres), one of the principal boxes or *palchi* for four paoli, about one and eightpence, I preferred it, and took my station in the centre of the grand tier. What in the name of economy can the managers pay to the prima donna, or the stars of the ballet? for there is also a ballet! The opera was very tolerably sung, and some passages by the tenore, a handsome young man scarcely twenty, drew much applause, although a note here and there was pronounced *un poco forzato*. These musical people have such happy terms for every shade of excellence or defect in vocalization. In the duet—Claudio! Claudio!—he was really fine, but his inexorable *padre* did not second him: this most harsh of *bassi*, having in the commencement of the duet poised himself on his right leg, the left extended towards his undutiful Claudio, and his left arm uplifted, with one finger raised, in what was intended to be a threatening attitude, appeared so perfectly satisfied with the position, that he did not afterwards venture to change it until the end; except by turning on the right leg as upon a pivot, in order to face his rebellious son, in whatever direction his more extended range of action placed him. For Claudio was much too profuse of attitude; and gave his threatening father incalculable trouble to present a front to him in various directions. Those who have seen the little figures of Napoleon with a sword in each hand, performing

the office of weathercock on a gusty day, can form some idea of the effect produced by the acting of Claudio's papa; with this difference, they must imagine one arm rusted at the joint, after a wet season, and hanging quietly at the side, leaving the other to do the work of both. The prima donna was not at all a bad cantatrice, but of the same school of acting. With a tolerably pretty little figure, she had the carriage and manner of a grenadier. As every one knows, Eliza is first discovered praying over the cradle of her child: from this position of humility, our prima donna arose in a most stately manner, and advanced with five well-measured and rather long steps to the front of the stage; then, having taken four similar paces to the right, and two to the left, she elevated one arm to about the level of her chin, and in this extravagant position, exclaimed, with a voice worthy of a better fate, *Ah miei figli!* The ridicule was acknowledged by a *bah!* The succeeding aria, however, was very fairly given, and appreciated to precisely the extent it deserved, by an audience from that rank in society, which, in England, would not have known Beethoven from Rossini, or Auber from Mozart. The *ballet*, which followed, was a comic fairy tale in action; a sort of continued *tableau parlant*, in which the dancing, if indeed any is introduced, is quite a secondary affair. The present *ballet*, represented for the first time, was entitled "The Magic Wood." The curtain rose, and discovered a rich old miser, in a strongly barred and bolted apartment, counting his gold. His eyes glisten at the glittering heaps; but his hand, carried involuntarily to his heart, accompanied by a deep sigh, informs us that something still is required to complete his happiness. He turns up his eyes with an expression intended to be sentimental: he can sit still no longer; he rises and rings the bell: a comical fellow appears, who is motioned to open an adjoining apartment, and call forth its inmates: they are the old gentleman's wards,—of course, beautiful girls. The miser places himself between them, looking first at one, and then at the other, then at his gold; at last he totters down upon his knees at the feet of the youngest, and looks most eloquent looks: the reply is a smart slap of the cheek, which projects him, kicking and struggling, among the money bags, to the great delight of the audience, who seemed to enter with more *abandon* and *gusto* into the story of the ballet, than the opera; over the fate of which they preside with all the gravity of wigged and robe-dressed judges. The miser's fate is the same with the elder ward; when, seizing his bags, which he drops and scrambles together again with the requisite bustle, he rushes into an inner chamber, casting a withering look upon the two laughing girls. The comical footman (a great pet with his audience) is now summoned by the young ladies; and

with the greatest glee, and many knowing winks and nods, opens a side door, and admits two fine young cavaliers, the lovers; who, while Pietro watches the miser's door, dance a-de-pas quatre *di scuola francese*, which is suddenly interrupted by a sign from Pietro, intimating that the old gentleman is again coming out of his den. All is now confusion; closets are too narrow for the sturdy beaux to be crammed into,—the windows too high for a lover's leap,—and the steps of the old man are heard approaching. Moment of intense interest!—but, by a tremendous effort of Pietro's, they are at last both squeezed up the chimney. The chimney board is thrown up again, and Pietro stands scratching his ear with a vacant gaze at nothing, as the miser appears; but his suspicions having been raised by the noise, he commences a diligent search. Doors, windows, and curtains, are turned about, amidst thunders of applause; and he is actually advancing upon the chimney-board, when Pietro, who had disappeared, re-enters with five Bohemian fortune-tellers, whose picturesque dresses, with high conical caps of black and white stripes, called down another round of most enthusiastic admiration. They environ the miser, still intent upon the chimney; seize and examine his palms; and with uncouth and wild gestures, nodding of high caps, and waving of striped wands, drag the resisting victim to the front of the stage. These scenes of bustle and confusion appear quite intoxicating to a second-rate Italian audience; and this *coup de main*, in conjunction with the cramming of the lovers up the chimney, seemed to produce the greatest delight. Nothing would calm the tumult of continued applause, but the personal appearance of Signore Scipione Barbutini, the *Maestro di Ballo*; who, through the midst of the Bohemians, advanced to the lamps; without coat, and in most profuse perspiration, from the great exertion necessary to maintain order behind the scenes on a first night, did this spoilt child of the public advance to receive their congratulations. He made the three accustomed *congrées* with much grace, and retired amidst continued plaudits. The miser, still intent upon the chimney, is only baffled by the extraordinary evolutions of the Bohemians, who lead him round and round the stage; persuading him at last, however, to permit a careful examination of his hand. A scroll is displayed as the oracle, with this inscription, "*Per voi c'è un tesoro.*" This intimation is received with joyous grimaces of anticipation: but he again recollects the chimney, and springs towards it; when the board suddenly revolves, displaying the motto, "*Il tesoro e nella selva*;" from which, turning towards the audience, he remains fixed in a position of half-delighted, half-stupified astonishment; during the continuation of which the lovers escape; glissading off, whilst a Bohemian dance is still whirling its magic

round about the flabbergasted miser. Renewed plaudits. Having been informed by the motto of the fortune-tellers that he would find his sought treasure in the wood, the next scene opens with a forest; in which the happy lovers are discovered renewing upon the smooth turf their interrupted pas-de-quatre, under the patronage of the great magician of the forest; who, after the dance is over, very good-naturedly proposes to marry them. They then explain with all the eloquence of action that they have no money, and that without it they cannot commence housekeeping; this point he appears to make light of, but motions them to the side, as the old miser is now seen approaching, stumbling and tumbling among the brambles (the magician having bespoke a very dark night), in search of his *tesoro*. At last he discovers his wards, and one of them he feels sure *must* be the *tesoro* in question. To see is to pursue, and he chases her round and round the trees and bushes in unavailing pursuit; for whenever his outstretched arms are about to enfold the trembling beauty, a tree or a post springs up between them, which he finds clasped in his embrace instead of his *tesoro*. The last time, the substitute is an immense black bear, who waltzes round the stage with the poor miser, at a rate altogether surprising. This last device carried the audience beyond itself—the plaudits were deafening, and Signore *Scipione Barbutini* was again called for, who, in nearly the same dress as before, but this time without waistcoat, and apparently much hotter, appeared in the midst of magician, players, miser, Bohemians, and wards, again to receive repeated congratulations.

The story draws near its close; the magician seems to consider the miser, after his bear dance, properly prepared to enter into his views, and proposes to him to settle half his wealth on the young couples as the price of his ransom. This, despite of his late fearful twinings, he positively refuses to do; when he is immediately surrounded and tormented by every species of imp and devil that the ballet-masters can set in motion. They scorch his wig with their blue-flamed torches, they plunge their red-hot pitchforks into his toes, and pinch his nose with fiery pincers; nevertheless, he will sooner part with his life than his gold. This is finely conceived; but what is to be done? the magician perceives that it is of no use shilly-shallying any longer; he sees, as Napoleon would have said, the “*il faut frapper le grand coup*,” and he boldly does so. His wand whirls thrice above the head of the devoted miser, who sinks into the earth; leaving no other traces of his existence, save a vast heap of money bags, which are taken possession of by the lovers and their loves, and every impediment to their marriage is thus removed at once. It was a bold stroke, ay, but a necessary one;

what else could the magician do? and the proof that he was right, was that the *dénouement* thus brought about was infinitely to the *gusto* of the audience. The wood then became suddenly illuminated, which is quite *en règle*, and all terminated with the grand *pas finale*, closing, as they say of popular orators, amid tremendous cheering. But all is not yet finished. On the first night of a successful production, there is much more to be done: it is now the turn of the audience, who have also their part to perform, and vociferating bravo!—mounting upon the seats, waving hats and handkerchiefs, and brandishing wreaths of laurel,—were not again pacified till Signore Scipione Barbutini again made his appearance. Then the decorator—then the dress-maker—then the scene-shifter, and all in a state of toilet similar to that of the manager: at last the whole *corps en masse*, strung hand in hand, were compelled to appear,

“A row of pearls;”

who, if they did not reap the harvest, at all events wore the laurels of their fame; which in good substantial wreaths were showered abundantly upon them. Whether the one great end and object of the business was answered I cannot say; but they all appeared highly delighted at their success; and I cannot think the expression of the manager was that of a loser.

Having given a sketch of both a comic and tragic Italian ballet, I must in conclusion, say a word about the Neapolitan San Carlos, and the numerous small fry of minor operas with which that noisy city swarms.

The great, much-talked of *San Carlos*, is situated in a bustling part of Naples, near the end of the splendid and most noisy *Strada di Toledo*, fronting an open space leading from the modern part of the town to the *Largo del Castello*, and the *Molo*—the scene of the glories of Pulcinello. The front is handsome, but as a mass, possessing only one decorated façade, the building cannot be compared to the Italian Opera House in London. But the sides are about to be thrown open, which will greatly improve the effect. The interior too, though exceedingly rich, and its decorations heightened in effect by the splendour of the Royal box, occupying the height of three tiers in the centre, does not strike with that air of aristocratic grandeur which is produced at our Opera. Then ours is, I should think at a random guess, full one-third larger, if not more; which, if it is perhaps less favourable to music, gives something of grandeur to its effect, which I have not seen equalled in any continental theatre. At the San Carlos, after the winter season, when they are unsupported by the *forestieri*, they have seldom any great

talent engaged; at all events, none that has acquired a Parisian or London reputation. During my visits in summer Ronzi di Begnis was the prima donna, who is already quite past her zenith; the other artists were very second-rate, and the opera, "Edouardo in Scozia," by Coccia, rather dull, and got through in any thing but brilliant style for the production of a Royal theatre. The ballet was quite of the French school: the subject "Cupid and Psyche," and though the dancing was good, the whole would have been considered second-rate at the Haymarket. Such were my impressions in the great San Carlos; but in the winter they had some of the great names, and many of my friends went over from Rome on purpose to enjoy the opera.

They who fancy that they must go to Italy to hear an Italian opera well got up, are very much mistaken; Italian operas were never got up in Italy with half the talent, completeness, and precision, with which they have been produced during the last four or five seasons in London and Paris. An Italian theatre (even supported by government, as the *Teatro Regio* always is) can never support more than two stars at once, and rarely more than one, since England and France have so spoiled them by over payment. Yet Italy (not perhaps excepting even Germany) will ever be the nursery from which we must draw fresh musical talent; and Naples will, I think, furnish more than all the rest of the Peninsula together, for music is there a passion. Besides two other good operatic theatres, there are at least seven or eight minor ones, where new operas are being brought out nightly; frequently the compositions of amateurs, and often sung by naughty "'prentice boys," such as would in England bound their ambition to spouting radical speeches at a debating society, or the tirades of Douglas or Cato at a private theatre. But, at Naples, this "wild youth" emits its ebullition in song. I heard an opera, composed by an anonymous author, on Bulwer's "Last Days of Pompeii," sung by such as these, at a little theatre on the *Largo del Castello*, and very dashingly some parts were done; whilst the opera itself contained flashes of genius not to be found in Pacini's work on the same subject. This was not a solitary case; fresh music of this description, such as would make the fortune of an English arranger, is poured forth in Naples with all the profusion of Vaudevilles in Paris; and *here* it is, before the audiences of these minor operas, that many of the greatest names in the history of Italian music have felt their way to fame.

One of these little theatres is devoted to parody. Every thing brought out at the San Carlos, is there, with the aid and assistance of the *egregio maestra* Signor Pulicinello, gracefully travestied. Its title is itself a parody, the "*San Carlino*."

Bellini's *Sonnambula* was immediately brought out with *Pulicinello padre della sonnambula*; the *sonnambula* herself being played by a woman six feet high, and stout in proportion, who caricatured Pasta's acting and singing with wonderful effect. But the wit of Punch, *basso cantante*, and *padre della sonnambula*, is lost in a great measure to those who do not understand the dialect, which is peculiarly adapted to the racy drollery of the Neapolitan Momus; who should never have been transplanted from the midst of the Lazzaroni and Maccaroni of his own Naples.

At Genoa there is a beautiful theatre, now but little frequented; it was built by the late King Carlo Felice*, a great amateur of the good Italian species, who can see the same opera fifty times without tiring. La Scala every one has seen and judged of, for few who get as far as Switzerland neglect to cross the Simplon to Milan, whose theatre occupies the second, if not the first place in Italy; and I should think that first-rate performers are engaged more frequently there than even at Naples. The theatres of Venice, Bologna, Modena, and other towns, are scarcely worth notice; yet the Venetians claim the reputation of being, after the Neapolitans, the greatest cultivators of music in the musical Peninsula.

* When the King is present, it is the etiquette not to applaud till Royal approbation is manifested, which is not always exactly in the proper place. Tamburini made some of his early efforts at the *Carlo Felice*; and, though his wonderful powers were at once evident to the audience, he was received in silence for several nights; the King did not applaud. At last a truly wonderful passage just raised the Royal finger to three taps of approval; the signal was enough; the burst of general applause stunning, and next night, the approbation of the Royal connoisseur was copious.

CHAPTER VII.

GALLERIES OF ART—FRESCOES—LIBRARIES, &c.

THE galleries of the Vatican and the Capitol contain more precious works of art than all the other cabinets of Europe united*. The noble halls of the Louvre, the Glyptotheca of Munich, or the famous Florentine gallery, are but petty collections when compared to the vast crowds of statuary that fill the Roman museums. A whole people of marble has been disinterred from the great tomb of Rome, and sumptuous apartments have been prepared by Papal munificence for their reception, where we may look upon works that decorated the chambers of the Cæsars;—that were named with admiration by the learned Cicero—and criticised and recorded by the fastidious Pliny.

It is very wonderful how such multitudes escaped the ravages of time and fanaticism; for even before the final dissolution of the empire, statues of the Pagan gods, or such as were in any way illustrative of their mythology, were deemed an abomination, and destroyed in vast numbers. This fact is recorded not only by contemporary Fathers of the Church, who speak of such things with pride and exultation, but also in an ancient painting on the walls of the baths of Constantine, where the work of destruction is going bravely on—where whole heaps of statuary are undergoing the ceremony of mutilation and destruction. They were destroyed for lime, if lime was wanted; if not, for pure zeal. So perished the rivals of the Apollo Belvidere, the Venus de Medici, and the Laocoon; for doubtless the most celebrated were selected as the fittest objects for public example. How those that have been recovered escaped the hand of time, or fanaticism, or avarice, or some other destroying power, appears a mystery. Did the chambers and public halls, which contained these wonders, gradually sink to decay with their paintings and statuary still about them, as the gradual depopulation of Rome left them tenantless, and eventually in their crumbling fall conceal the treasures? or were the precious marbles purposely buried to

* This remark alludes principally to works of sculpture.

preserve them from barbarism, plunder, or fanatic destruction. The former appears most probable; for many statues have been found in subterranean apartments occupying their original pedestals, or fallen and broken at the foot of them; evidently displaced by the crash of the neglected walls they had so long adorned. Such was the case with nearly every thing discovered at the Villa of Hadrian. But what a *bouleversement* of social organization to produce such a state of things! It is scarcely possible to imagine the splendid halls of the imperial Palace at Tivoli left tenantless; with their gilded ceilings, their painted walls, and their beautiful statues, the prize of the first comer—and yet none found to seize the vacant home, or appropriate its masterpieces of art. The gold, the silver, the bronze, found amateurs—but none to appreciate the glorious marbles. Half the noble palaces of Rome probably shared a similar destiny, occasionally the retreat of wild animals, or banditti, or become the roost of the owl and bat, while their treasures of art were still ranged about them. Their gilded roofs and marble columns, while still fresh and beautiful, were overgrown with parasitic vegetation—the wall-flower sprouting from Corinthian capitals, and mingling its own fresh green leaves with the gilded foliage of the acanthus; and bind-weed springing in the marble locks of Grecian statues, wreathing their pale brows with natural garlands, as at modern funerals they strew the youthful dead with flowers. How strange to have lived in such an age; to have ranged through palaces and temples, and found no dwellers or worshippers; to have seen the noble works of Scopas or Praxiteles standing about, and finding no claimants;—none to cast a passing look of admiration, while Rome was still partially inhabited, and still considered a capital! But all who had the means of flight had been driven forth, and few, save the unfortunate and friendless, constituted the shrunken population. Rome had then more houses than families—more statues than people; and the conquerors were not dwellers in towns; they charged what spoil they could upon their gothic waggons, and hurried on again in search of other booty. Whilst each successive inroad of the enemy increased the desolation, and numberless halls untenanted eventually fell, covering their columns and statues with a hill of broken cornices and shattered fragments; thus forming a natural tumulus over the tomb of these marble gods. Such must have been the fate of the statuary of Rome, unless it were buried intentionally; which does not appear probable, either from the evidence or the reason of the case; for in the circumstances of the times, most men would have had objects more important to their self-preservation to save than statues. Yet in a few instances, such may have been the case; but the majority no doubt met

the fate I have described. How strange, to imagine the Apollo Belvidere gradually sinking into the soil that ruins were creating around, and not an eye tutored to appreciate his godlike grace, and brush the earth away, if but for a momentary ecstasy in beholding the unrivalled form !

Buried either by time and ruins, or by the hand of man, were all the statues of Rome ; for Poggius, in 1430, mentions only five as then in existence ; of these, two were the figures with horses, on Monte Cavallo, attributed to Phidias and Praxiteles ; and a third, the equestrian statue of Aurelius, which then stood in front of the Lateran, and was made to spout forth wine through the nostrils on fêtes and holidays.

The colossal statue of the Nile was discovered in digging a vineyard near the Temple or Convent of Minerva ; but the impatient proprietor, who was annoyed by some visits of curiosity, reinterred his troublesome visitant for another century. The fate of the Nile was fortunate, for many statues and fragments of sculpture that were then continually dug up in the course of the increasing operations of agriculture and building, consequent on the growing prosperity of Papacy, were quietly destroyed for lime, or built up unnoticed in the interior of vulgar walls. It is fortunate that the principal discoveries did not take place till a later period, when the progress of modern art had produced such men as Da Vinci, Buonarotti, and Sanzio, to appreciate them, and proclaim their matchless excellence.

The Pisans were the first to attempt the renovation of a school of painting and sculpture, and as early as the thirteenth century the Campo Santo became a sort of gallery for the reception of fragments of ancient art. But no works of importance were collected. Florence followed, and lastly Rome. It was reserved for the prolific soil of Rome, to give forth the wondrous works of the ancients.

The discovery of the Apollo and the Laocoon, in the reign of Giulio II., when the arts had reached their zenith in modern Italy, was received with an enthusiasm that encouraged farther research ; and successive excavations rapidly brought to light the Venus de Medici, the Farnesian Hercules, the famous Torso, the Gladiator, and a host of other masterpieces. These, however, generally became the private property of the individuals on whose land they were found, or of the Pope for the time being. So that the Venus was carried to Florence by the representatives of Leo X. ; the Hercules was transported to Naples by the Farnesi ; and many matchless works were made to decorate the open gardens of their proprietors, where they were rapidly destroyed by exposure ; or, what was perhaps worse, sold, and dispersed or lost.

As these discoveries increased, ancient sculpture became an article of commerce; dealing in antiques grew into a lucrative profession, and the statue merchants of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries exported *ancient* Apollos and Venuses to all parts of Europe; the majority of which were bad modern copies. Rome was being drained of her ancient sculptures by the foreign demand for antiques; and even her temples were attacked;—for Lord Bristol purchased, with the intention of removing it to England, the beautiful ruin at Tivoli. But these things were eventually prevented by a Papal decree forbidding the removal of any ancient marbles from Rome, without the express permission of the reigning Pontiff.

Guili II. had contented his enthusiasm with placing the Apollo, the Laocoon, the Torso, and other famous works, as they were discovered, in the *cortile* of the Belvidere, in the Vatican; where they remained exposed to the injuries of the weather. This antiquarium*, however, was the nucleus round which the present Vatican Museum has gradually formed itself. It soon became crowded with additional works; as did the other courts, and even the anti-chambers of the Vatican. But it was not till the reign of Ganganelli (Clement XIV., 1769), that the cortile of the Belvidere was surrounded with a portico and cabinets, to protect the works which had rendered its name celebrated over all civilized Europe. He also prepared the rotunda, for the reception of ancient sculpture; and built, or altered, the great square vestibule, for the same purpose. These, with many minor additions, placed the Roman gallery upon a par with the other royal galleries of Europe. But Braschi, who succeeded Ganganelli in 1775, as Pius VI., is the great name in the history of the Vatican collection, of which, as a classified museum of antiquities, he was in fact the founder.

The additional galleries, built by this Pontiff, are as rich as rare marbles and gilding can make them; but the state of architecture about the middle and close of the eighteenth century, though better in Italy than in the north of Europe, had a poorness and littleness of style that the richest material cannot raise to magnificence: yet these are noble apartments. The gallery of candelabra and vases; the hall of the car; the rich staircase, decorated with the colossal figures of the Nile and the Tigris, that conducts to the superior apartments; the *Sala a croce greca*, the *Sala rotunda*, the hall of the muses, the hall of animals; an apartment for a collection of busts, and an immense statue gallery, were the

* The name by which it was long known.

principal additions of Braschi*. Pius VII., who succeeded him, added the immense gallery of inscriptions, and other galleries of statues and busts nearly as numerous, making a total that appears almost incredible.

The irruption of the revolutionised French, interrupted the progress of the museum; and the noble works of the great sculptors of Greece became a second time the trophies of war. The legions had borne them from their native shores to Rome; and now the victorious armies of France carried them to Paris, to glut the artistic vanity of the French. But in these modern times, a little more form was given to the robbery. The Pope was reduced to the necessity of signing the Treaty of Tolentino, by which nearly all the statues were formally ceded to France; and in order to reconcile the people, sermons were preached against them as Pagan abominations—taking care not to forget the advice of St. Paul, who recommended breaking the idols; nor the conduct of Constantine, who disposed of some by public sale, as a mark of contempt.

At Florence, the conquest of the gallery was not quite so easy, for there was a lady in the case. The Laocoon and the Apollo quitted Rome quietly enough; but the attempted evasion of the Venus is quite a romance; she disappeared clandestinely from her pedestal in the famous tribune, and after numberless hair-breadth escapes, both by sea and land, was eventually captured near the coast of Sicily, and met the Apollo in the Louvre.

These trophies were returned, with few exceptions, in 1814, and now occupy their old positions in the Vatican.

On my first visit to this wonderful collection, all criticism was absorbed in admiration; and it was not till after many repeated visits that I could unravel the maze of astonishment, and detach separate objects from the mass. While I saw this vast collection of statues by daylight alone, I was most struck by their finished beauty, and the splendour of their general effect, ranged in those noble galleries; and it was not till I had seen them by torch-light, that I was enabled fully to individualize and mark the beauty of conception and unrivalled perfection of detached works. By that light, the architecture of the rooms sunk into dark background; and the Antinous, the Apollo, or the Laocoon, might be contemplated, untroubled by the modern associations of surrounding objects. In the broad yellow gleam of the torch, their forms shone in powerful chiaroscuro against the surrounding darkness, and they seemed truly works of another age, brought

* And these vast apartments were literally crowded with fine works, forming altogether the noblest gallery of art that perhaps the world ever knew, for here were a large number of the splendid works that in ancient Rome had been scattered over a thousand halls and palaces, all collected in one place.

before the eye as in a magic mirror—forms almost too perfect and too beautiful to contemplate but for an instant; and as the light moved on, and they relapsed into darkness, the passing idea assumed a painful reality.

Any worthy description in detail of the works contained in the Vatican, even in a catalogue raisonné, appears impossible. But I am anxious to note down a few of the principal objects here assembled. A noble gallery, 1000 feet in length, is occupied, besides other works, with a splendid collection of sepulchral inscriptions. One side is filled by christian, and the other by pagan, records.

These sepulchral epitaphs of the first ages of christianity are deeply interesting, and their monograms and symbols might serve to elucidate many obscure points of the faith and history of the early christians. The monogram ✠, the bunch of grapes, the ark of Noah, the dove, the anchor, the lamb, &c. &c. are among the most frequent; but they are placed without classification or order; those of consular personages being alone distinguished.

The pagan inscriptions, on the contrary, are elaborately classed into many divisions; those of emperors, empresses, consuls, magistrates, slaves, freed-men, merchants, shopkeepers, &c. forming an interesting chain of the sepulchral records of all classes of the Roman people, from the rising greatness, to the fall of Rome.

There is another vast corridor of nearly equal dimensions, built also by Pius VII., under the direction of Canova, who has placed the bust of the pope, from his own chisel, in a conspicuous situation. This is filled with a great variety of works, which, any where but in Rome, would found a museum in themselves; but here they are passed with little attention, as not being of the first rank. The *Braccio Nuovo* was the last addition of this pontiff, since his restoration, and was completed between 1817 and 1822. The wall is enriched with columns of ancient marble, and the floor is composed of splendid ancient mosaics, like nearly all the floors of the principal apartments of this museum.

Among the various things worthy of notice in the *Braccio Nuovo* are, a fine repetition of the famous Borghesi statue of Silenus holding a child in his arms; a fine Antinös, with a modern head, by D'Este, one of the best living sculptors of Rome; an interesting statue of Demosthenes opening a book; a splendid colossal figure of the Nile, which, with one of the Tiber, now in Paris, was found near St. Stephano del Cacco, upon the site of the Temple of Serapis. Then there is a magnificent Pallas from the Giustiniani collection, supposed to be a copy of the famous statue of Phidias in the Parthenon. It is a great work; the reposeful intelligence of the expression, the graceful but majestic *pose*, and the noble dis-

position and grand execution of the drapery, all proclaim it a work of high art. There is a fine heroic statue of Lucius Verus, whose magnificent head, and finely proportioned limbs, present a flattering portrait of a noble Roman; and, besides a number of statues which I cannot particularize, the room contains a multitude of interesting portraits, busts, and other objects of ancient art. In the adjoining garden may be seen the great pine of gilded bronze, which once crowned the Mausoleum of Hadrian; and there is a graceful casino built for Pius IV., a Medici, by Pirro Ligorio, which contains an interesting collection of terra cottas, got together by Canova. Proceeding in the museum, there are five or six apartments filled with busts, many of whose ancient inscriptions leave no doubt as to the personages represented, and are, on that account, highly interesting. Then there is a room devoted to the casts from the frieze of the Parthenon, presented by George the Fourth, whose portrait by Lawrence, which is placed with them, ill accords with the severe conceptions of the ancients. There is another apartment, containing a small but fine collection of Egyptian works. This forms the portion of the Museum added by Pius VII.

We now enter the splendid rooms of Braschi; and in the great square vestibule we find the Torso Belvidere, the work of Apollonico, son of Nestor, an Athenian. The contemplation of this fragment is said to have formed the style of Michael Angelo; we see in it the type of those gigantic conceptions, which astonish in the Last Judgment, the Moses, and, indeed, all his great works. He restored* the Apollo, and other ancient works of a character less suited to his peculiar feeling in art. I could have wished him to attempt the restoration of this, his beau-ideal of excellence. It seems strange he did not—perhaps he shrunk from the attempt—its hopeless perfection is indeed discouraging to a modern artist; but if Buonarrotti trembled at the task, what other shall attempt it? No—it must remain a fragment. Here is also the sarcophagus of Scipio Barbatus.

The famous Meleagre, once in possession of the Pighini family, gives its name to another cabinet; and in the circular vestibule is a sculptured tazza of peculiar elegance. The Cabinet of the Mercury, one of the earliest discovered statues, contains also many beautiful vases and bathing vessels. In the *Gabinetto delle maschere* is a pretty little crouching Venus, supposed to be a repetition of the celebrated one by Bubalo, a faun of Rosso Anticho, and a pavement from the Hadrian Villa, very perfect and beautiful.

* A portion of the right arm and leg were broken off and missing when the statue was discovered; and this, with other smaller losses, were restored by Michael Angelo.

We next meet with another collection of busts, and then the great Statue Gallery ; the only detraction to which is, that in its erection it destroyed the beautiful palazetto of Polajoli, with its curious paintings and ornaments, done for Innocent VIII. This gallery, to one who has only seen the Museum of London (where two or three perfect statues are all that can be counted), and reckoned that a fine collection, must alone appear wonderful, and seem to contain all the rest of the statues of antiquity that can by any possibility have been recovered. But in this vast range of statuary I can but barely name a few, though so many are worthy of careful and critical description. There is the deserted Ariadne, a strikingly beautiful work, flanked by the two Barberini Candelabra, whose delicate and highly-wrought foliage is the despair of modern imitation ; and the Altemps Paris, and a Gnidian Venus. But I must quit them for the elaborate wonders of the Saloon of Animals, wrought to the life with such accuracy and minute elaboration, that they might be the very creatures turned to stone. Some are composed of different coloured marbles, to imitate the natural markings of the animals ; others, of such marble as most nearly assimilated with nature in hue ; and some of the pure Pentelic or Carrara stone. The spirit and general excellence with which many of these are conceived and executed, places them in the first rank of art ; which, in its highest range, ennobles the most homely subject.*

One has hardly quitted these rare productions, when the Gallery of Vases and Candelabras open upon him ; and this room gives him, perhaps, a higher conception of the splendour of ancient Roman dwellings than any other monuments that remain. These mere accessories and ornaments are alone sufficient to place the ancients immeasurably before us in the scale of art. The richness of fancy, originality, execution, material—all are astonishing : and these were secondary ornaments in the houses of those Romans. Could we but see some of their tables, their couches, and the more immediate vehicles of display, even these decorations would sink low in the comparison. Pliny describes tables of one block of amber ; others, composed of ivory ; others, where a mixture of rich materials were combined in a framework of gold or silver ; but such treasures were the spoils of the Goths, or the Vandal ; or were torn in pieces by the impoverished owners, to sell the gold or silver ; whilst the mere marble found neither robbers nor purchasers.

* Forsyth remarks that "the ancient sculptors, intent only on man, are supposed to have neglected the study of animals." Where was this splendid collection ? If removed to Paris, he must have seen it there, and if so, I cannot understand his meaning ; for he surely would not deny the extreme beauty of many of these works, which modern sculpture has never approached ; and even the sister art, in the pencil of a Snyders or a Landseer, not equalled in accurate execution.

The *Sala delle Muse* contains statues of the Muses and Apollo, found together in one of the splendid ruins of Tivoli, called the Villa of Cassius, with many other interesting pieces of sculpture here collected, formerly in the possession of the Barberini; from whose hands many of the finest slipped in exchange for gold, and now deck the Louvre, and some private collections in England; but the Sappho, the heads of Pericles and Aspasia, and most of the Muses, remain.

The principal ornament of the great *Sala Rotunda* is the immense tazza of porphyry, 44½ feet in circumference, in a single piece. Discovered at an early period, in the Baths of Caracalla, it was carried to decorate the Villa of Giulio III., a present from Ascanio Colonna. Clement XI. brought it to the Vatican, but it was placed in one of the outer courts; and it remained for Pius VI. (Braschi) to remove it to its present situation, in the centre of this superb saloon. The surrounding niches are occupied by fine statues of colossal dimensions; but two are vacant; the Melpomene and the Augustus having remained in Paris.

The *Sala a croce greca* contains the immense depository urns of the Constantine family. Though somewhat barbarous in design, their highly polished finish, and beautiful material, render them very splendid objects; and together with the superb staircase that leads to the *Camera della biga*, form the absorbing objects of attention, though the room is filled with statuary. The Room of the Car, as it is called, takes its name from a marble chariot, the body of which once stood in the church of St. Mark, as the episcopal chair; it has been restored, and with the two attached horses which have been added, one only of which is antique, forms a beautiful object. It occupies the centre of the apartment, which is a very splendid one, entirely encased in marbles. The other objects, though numerous, are too similar to such as I have already spoken of, to call my particular attention—and I can no longer bear detention from the cortile of the Belvidere. I hasten to behold the Apollo and the Laocoon. It appears strange that no recent diggings have turned up any thing comparable to the fruits of the early excavations: one is, before seeing them, tempted to imagine that being the first, and forming the theme of the eulogiums of such men as Raphael and Michael Angelo, they may have been over-rated, whilst the more numerous recent discoveries, possessing no longer the exciting charm of surprise and complete novelty, have not received their due meed of praise; but enter the court of the Belvidere—watch the throwing open of the door that reveals the Apollo—and such fancies evaporate in a moment. Michael Angelo and Raphael were not mistaken; the judgment of centuries is not to be reversed; the Apollo is a miracle of art: how far surpassing any work I have ever seen! The best casts give no idea of it. There

is a flesh-like transparency in the marble, about the curl of the lip and the nostril, that the opaque plaster cannot perfectly represent ; and a lovely smoothness of finish that it entirely loses. I am endeavouring to examine it coolly and dispassionately, as a production of the chisel ; but there is a something god-like about the whole conception that defies me, and looks me down ; and I involuntarily abandon the technicalities of connoisseurship, and seek the well-remembered words of Byron to express the emotion of the moment when I stood gazing at this miraculous work :—

“ The sun in human limbs arrayed, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight ;—
The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance ; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the deity.

Another cabinet contains the *Laocoon*, a work perhaps more perfect in *execution* than the *Apollo*—more wonderful in the unerring ease and accuracy with which the elaborate modellings of the muscular action have been wrought—more wonderful in every respect in the *manipulation* : but there is not that godlike grace that looks down criticism, to hedge it in. One can coolly contemplate the *Laocoon* as a piece of sculpture, and perhaps the mere connoisseur enjoys it more on that account ; but it must yet stand second to the *Apollo* : and next perhaps comes the *Venus at Florence* ; but there are two or three works that I should almost feel inclined to place before her.

As to the period of the execution of these great works many opinions exist. The learned Winkelman and his contemporaries have left folios on the subject ; and Lessing has added a large book to the number, upon the *Laocoon* alone ; but all are unconvincing. Woods boldly cuts the Gordian knot, by deciding all works of the Italian *Carara* marble to be *Greek*, and all those of the *Greek Parian* marble to be *Roman**. This appears a somewhat contradictory statement, for he has been doubtless led to such a conclusion by the fact that the *Laocoon*, the work of Rhodian sculptors, as attested by the inscription, and by Pliny, is of Italian marble, as also the *Apollo*, whose sculptor is unknown. The conclusions at the present day appear to be, that neither of these works† belong to the great

* I can understand Woods when he supposes many statues of *Italian marble* to be of Greek workmanship ; but when he proceeds to consider statues of *Greek marble* to be of Roman workmanship, I am at a loss to conceive his meaning.

† The *Apollo* or the *Laocoon*.

epoch of Grecian art, but are productions of the period of Trajan, by some of the numerous Greek artists attracted to Rome by his munificence, which, with other combining circumstances, carried the arts to a pitch of excellence, equal in a peculiar walk to that of the age of Pericles. These artists, settled at Rome, would no doubt use the Carrara marble. But there are, in my opinion, still stronger grounds for the supposition that they are works of the Trajean period. The earlier Greeks, in working out their conception of *beau idéal*, finally adopted certain conventional styles of head for each particular divinity. A Jupiter, an Apollo, a Cupid, an Adonis, a Mercury, had each its peculiar set of features and expression; and statues of the Periclean age may be recognised at once by the head, without reference to the attributes or position. This remark may be applied to the Venus, which is of Greek marble, and evidently a work of that period; the head alone would proclaim it a Venus. But in the age of Trajan, these conventional features had been to a great extent abandoned, and the system of generalization to form a *beau idéal* had given way. Natural models were resorted to with zest, the individualities of which were, to a certain extent, transferred to the marble. These remarks apply strongly to the Apollo. The conventional Apollo head of the Greeks is not found in the Belvidere statue, as may be proved by comparing it with any of the undoubted Greek works of the early period; two or three of which might be cited. The whole contour of the head is Italian; and among the modern peasantry of the campagna and neighbouring hills, I have frequently noticed instances of a striking resemblance to this famous Apollo. Some one has said, in noticing that Benvenuto Cellini designed his celebrated Perseus from one of his pupils, and the splendid head of Medusa from his housekeeper, that Italy has no such models for her artists now. But they could never have beheld the noble heads that one daily sees in and about Rome; and surely not the beautiful boy whom I found standing to Gibson for a Cupid.

Another cabinet of this famous cortile is occupied by a celebrated Mercury, and in the fourth stand three figures by Canova; but I will not do this artist the injustice of examining them here; what misjudging ambition could have led him to permit their invasion of such a neighbourhood, I am at a loss to conceive. We will not take advantage of it*.

The picture collection of the Vatican is all contained in one room, and consists

* Forsyth, carried away by the stream of the prevailing fashion, imagined that Canova had seized the true spirit of Grecian sculpture, and rivalled its greatest works. He dismisses the Apollo with a word—it is true that only a cast occupied the pedestal—while he falls into ecstasies upon seeing the *Athletæ* and *Perseus* of Canova.

principally of such pictures as were carried to Paris from different parts of the Roman states, and which being returned altogether, it was deemed advisable to form into a gallery, instead of restoring them to their original and separate localities. This collection, though small, contains the Transfiguration of Raphael, and the St. Girolamo of Domenichino—the two pictures that occupy the highest places in modern art; Raphael's the first, Domenichino's the second. Nicholas Poussin named the third in succession. After the two great works of Raphael and Domenichino, he esteemed the Descent of the Cross by Daniel di Volterra as the next most perfect picture in the world. But we have no means of estimating the correctness of his judgment, for it was destroyed by the French in attempting its removal from the church of the Trinta de' Monti.

Here one can first appreciate Raphael; the *Transfiguration*, the *Madonna di Foligno*, and the *Madonna de' fiori*, are works which present him to us in a new light. Even the beautiful *Madonna della sediola*, at Florence, did not promise such works as these; the eye must, however, be educated before it can perceive the greatness of the works of Raphael. Here is nothing of the charm of facile execution, which distinguishes the works of Correggio, or the Carracci; none of the magic chiar-oscuro of Guercino, with its studied massings of light and colour; none of the *grandiose* of Michael Angelo, nor the seductive hues of the Venetians. All is severe, simple, and unpretending; but traced with a grace, a purity, a meaning, that none have approached. Conceived with a truly poetic feeling, his pictures have been elaborated with the sole purpose of realizing the ideal; he has gone straight forward to that one original purpose; and every minor charm has been sacrificed to its accomplishment. The whole power of his genius appears to have been thrown into his outline, the purity and beauty of which have never been rivalled.

His works bear the trying test of reducing to mere black and white, in prints, better than those of any other painter; and yet his colour and execution have a charm peculiar to themselves, which a true lover of Raphael does not like to lose. This lies in a total absence from all artistic affectation; there is no smack of the easel about them; none of the trickery of the mere art: they are beautifully simple embodyings of a poetic and refined conception, whose delicacy is undefiled by the technicalities of the studio. The expression of his heads, particularly his Madonnas, is unlike that of all his contemporaries: Victor Hugo found a peculiar and appropriate charm about them, which he calls, a mingling of virginity, maternity, and divinity; and in the angelic smiles of those charming heads there is something that cannot perhaps be defined in better words. I can imagine

Raphael might have been still greater as a sculptor than a painter, and yet could not spare one of his pictures for the risk of the experiment.

The Vatican museum contains also a magnificent collection of prints ; forming an history, from the first rude efforts of the art, to its fullest development in the school of Morghen.

The library of the Vatican is not only rich in books, but its chambers are crowded with a profusion of curious works of ancient art ; some of which are perfect and beautiful in themselves ; but others are mere fragments, broken altars of porphyry, and shattered gods of bronze—the adoration of whose ancient votaries is succeeded by that of modern antiquaries. The collection of MSS. is one of the finest in the world, but is not half explored, and the difficulties thrown in the way of examination seem likely to prevent, for an indefinite period, the exhumation of treasures which perhaps lie buried there. For of all the valuable Greek MSS. which Nicholas V. obtained through the labours of his emissary, Janus Lascaris, before the fall of Constantinople, comparatively few were ever made public ; though Tiraboschi states that above eighty of them were works before unknown*. Among the most interesting MSS. that are shown, is a Virgil, said to be of the age of Constantine, profusely illuminated ; and the figures are accurately represented in the costume of that period. Whether or not it is of the Constantine age, it bears intrinsic marks of great antiquity, and is a highly interesting relic. There is a Pliny too, with all the animals of Noah's ark, perhaps of the fourth or fifth century, and an unique Terence. Among the works of the middle ages, there are many interesting letters of eminent personages. Among others, some of Henry VIII. to Anna Boleyn, and also a copy of his book on the Seventh Sacrament, which gained him the title of *Defender of the Faith*.

Rome contains several other public libraries ; the next most important of which is the one bequeathed by Cardinal Girolamo Casanate to the Dominican monks of *Santa Maria sopra Minerva* : it contains, among many rare books and MSS., a Bible, whose characters are not written, but impressed by hand, with a sort of raised seal dipped in ink. This curious process, which has been called *chirigraphy*, forms the link between manuscript and print. The Romans had seals of this description (of which many specimens are preserved in the library of the

* The French were fully aware of these buried treasures of the Vatican ; and obtained by the treaty of Tolentino the right of selecting a large number for removal to Paris, but their selection was not very scientific, being made much in the style of Dibdin's purchase of a library—by the yard. They consequently obtained but few prizes, and the Vatican still may contain undreamt-of treasures of ancient literature.

Vatican and in the Museum of Naples), which were used for stamping the proprietor's name on linen and various articles, and also for other purposes : and it appears wonderful, how, with this near approach, they should have missed that art of printing, the discovery of which might have changed the history of the world.

The Biblioteca Angelica, at the convent of St. Agostino, contains nearly 150,000 volumes, and possesses 3000 MSS., besides many editions of the fifteenth century. The Barberini library possesses upwards of 10,000 MSS., a great number of which are from the famous Strozzi Library at Florence, among which are some autographs of Petrarch.

The Corsini library is also open to the public, and is peculiarly rich in editions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries ; it likewise contains a fine collection of engravings, particularly of the early Italian periods.

The Chigi library contains a beautiful illuminated missal of Boniface VIII., and some MSS. of the fourth century.

The Biblioteca Vallicelliana possesses the famous bible of Alcuin, and many autographs of Baronius.

The Vatican museum, but for its matchless Laocoon and Apollo, might perhaps be surpassed by that of the Capitol ; which alone contains more of the first-rate productions of ancient sculpture than any other collection in Europe ; perhaps than all combined.

The collection was commenced about 1650, by Innocent X. (Pamphily), and added to by several of his successors, but it was not till the restoration of Pius VII., after the fall of Napoleon, that any classified arrangements were attempted. Here are twelve spacious apartments filled with rare and beautiful works. There are many ancient inscriptions of great interest, and an ancient plan of the city, which has been of great assistance in determining the situation of the public monuments ; but unfortunately the work is executed in a careless and inaccurate manner, and although the names of several public buildings accompany the engraved outlines, yet those outlines are so incorrect, and so much at variance with possibility, as almost to exclude the record, interesting as it is, from the serious attention of the antiquary. The Mosaics here are numerous, particularly smaller and more finished compartments than such as were used for floors ; the most remarkable one is that representing three pigeons upon the border of a vase (described by Pliny), which has been so frequently copied that it must be familiar to every one, either on snuff-boxes, table-tops, carpets, chimney boards, or some even more ordinary utensils of modern furniture ; for the design

has found its way to the Potteries of Staffordshire, where the manufacturers are not over nice in their application of a pretty design. But, though thousands may be familiar with the general composition, they alone, who have visited the Museum of the Capitol, can form an idea of the perfection of the execution. In these rooms also are collected a vast number of those basso and alto-relievi, which are perhaps the most wonderful works of the ancient sculptors; and some of their masterpieces in this walk of art are doubtless to be found among the splendid specimens in this museum. Its collection of statues is also very fine: there are about the lower apartments, a colossal *Ocean*; another colossus called a *Phyrrus*, and an iconic statue of Julius Cæsar, which is I believe unique. A room is entirely filled with beautiful imitations of Egyptian sculpture, of the age of Hadrian; from that statue-mine, his Villa at Tivoli.

The collection of busts of the Emperors is most extensive, and with a little assistance from the museum at Naples and the Louvre, with a few from the private Palaces of Rome, might be made complete, from Augustus to Constantine, which would form a most interesting gallery. Such a collection might at all events be made in engraving; but perhaps the classic *fureur* is too much *en décadence* to afford encouragement to the enterprise. And it may be more desirable, to tourists at all events, that such a work should not weaken the pleasure of a first visit to the Capitoline collection.

The two pieces of sculpture that excite the most astonishment are perhaps the Centaurs in black marble; the surpassing beauty of the finish, and the elaborate making out of the detail are truly marvellous; and yet the simplicity and ease of the design is such, that they have all the repose necessary to great works of art: the positions, the spirit, and the execution, are all equally admirable. And then they are of such a portable size that one longs to carry them away—they would form such delightful embellishments for one's own vestibule or staircase: they are the only things in the collection that really disturbed my acquisitiveness.

Near them is a noble infant Hercules of basalt that I was much struck with: the ponderous limbs of the baby-monster are admirably conceived and wrought; they possess the infantine character, and yet appear formed rather of embryo muscle, than fat or flesh, as is the impression with ordinary representations of infancy. There is a boy struggling with a goose, which has often been repeated by the ancients; copies no doubt of some great work which is lost. I have seen it in mosaic, and on a bronze lamp found at Pompeii; the present is in white marble, and beautifully executed enough to be the original. But it appears to be of the period of Trajan, which would render that impossible.

What shall I say to the faun of *Rosso Antico*?—squeezing the bunch of juicy grapes into the goblet as he reels; he really seems to live,—and the wild laugh of bacchanal delight with which he watches the dropping nectar, is so in accordance with the ruddy hue of the marble, that one may watch him till he seems to breathe.

One quits this work reluctantly, even for the Capitoline Venus, whose softer and more voluptuous charms have won admirers from her Medicean rival. It is a lovely statue—too lovely, as Leo XII. deemed; for among other reforms of his short reign, she was removed to a place called the *Magazzino*, and shut up with many others deemed too attractive for public view. Among these is a group of Mars and Venus, a group of the Graces, and a number of other beautiful things, which a foreigner may however see by a special application. The Holy See cares not for the morals of heretics; it is her Romans that she thus protects. But I must hasten to the last room, where the centre is occupied by the dying Gladiator, one of the masterpieces of that group of ten or twelve, that makes the despair of modern chisellers. I will say nothing of it in the way of criticism, the whole thing is admirable, in conception—expression—execution; one of those almost faultless works that Grecian sculptors have alone found the means of producing. The right arm is a restoration by Buonarotti: how delightful it is to witness this mingling of genius—a Praxiteles, a Scopas, or a Phidias, thus shaking hands with a modern, across the chasm of twenty centuries! This room is a constellation of marble stars;—here is the Flora, the Antinous, the Sleeping Faun, the Cupid and Psyche, a Lucian Apollo, and the superb Capitoline Juno; but having dismissed the Gladiator with a word, what am I to say of these, beautiful as they are?

In the *Palazzo dei Conservatori*, on the opposite side of the square, is a collection of pictures much more numerous than that of the Vatican, but not so select. The court leading to these apartments contains among many other things some colossal fragments, which it is conjectured may have belonged to the great statue of Nero, the pedestal of which may still be traced near the Coliseum. Vespasian transformed it to an Apollo, by substituting another head, a practice which, in the later portion of Roman story, became common enough; indeed, statues were eventually made with moveable heads, to accommodate economically the rapid fluctuations of public opinion. The Greeks rarely admitted an iconic, or portrait statue. When the honour of a statue was decreed to an eminent citizen, it was not a personal resemblance, but formed upon an ideal standard of beauty; representing figuratively the action sought to be honoured.

It thus was certain of being, not only an honour to a citizen, but an ornament to the city, which an *iconic* statue might not have been. Yet, under singular circumstances, a portrait statue was sometimes decreed ;—Miltiades had a portrait statue, though, according to his biographers, his *personnel* was not calculated for ornament.

Some have thought the fragments in question portions of the colossal Apollo that Lucullus brought from Pontus. They are of a remarkably grand style, and bespeak a work of considerable merit. The apartments of the palace possess many other works of art besides pictures, particularly a bronze wolf with Romulus and Remus, which antiquarians suppose to be the one spoken of by Cicero, which was struck with lightning previous to the conspiracy of Cataline. It is actually injured, as if by such a shock ; and its ancient Etruscan workmanship is another ally of the antiquarian dream, which it would be cruel to disturb, particularly as the ground of supposition appears so reasonable.

The paintings are a miscellaneous collection, where there are many poor works. But the stupendous picture of Guercino, the St. Petronille, which I have spoken of in St. Peter's, where it is copied in mosaic, and which surely ought to rank as the third, now that Volterra's is destroyed, is alone sufficient, with the charming Sybil of Domenichino, to give the Capitoline Gallery a high character, even if it did not contain some excellent works of the Carracci and Guido ; and also of Palma, the younger—a great artist little known in England ; besides many interesting portraits.

One must not quit the Capitol without visiting the *Protomoteca* : here were removed the busts of eminent men, who, after the time of Raphael, sought in the Pantheon a depository niche. Pius VII. thought them unsuited to the situation : poets, warriors, painters, philosophers, (some of whom were heretics), were not in keeping with the sacred character of a church* ; and Canova was commissioned with the respectful dethronement of all who had sought an eternal resting-place in the Pantheon. They were removed in the night to a suite of rooms prepared for the purpose in the Capitol, and by the munificence of Canova, the collection has been much extended ; he having at his own expense commissioned nearly all the more eminent sculptors of Rome, to execute several busts of different great men, who have illustrated the history of modern Italy. Fourteen apartments, suitably decorated, are filled with these memorials, and among the more dazzling names of philosophy, poetry, and the Leonian age of art, the

* The emulators of Pius VII. deny Byron's statue a place in Westminster Abbey.

gentle fame of Cimarosa and Sacchini, the dulcet sounds of whose compositions formed the delight of the last century, has not been forgotten.

Besides the two great galleries of art of the Vatican and the Capitol, every palace of Rome contains its pictures and sculptures; but I propose rambling through these *Palazzi* as a distinct subject. I am anxious, however, to note my impressions upon two branches of the fine arts, of which Rome, without possessing a single *collection*, is the finest gallery in the world; I allude to mosaic and fresco painting.

The mosaics which belong to classical antiquity are only to be found in the museums; but to search out those of the latter ages of the empire, and the four or five dark centuries that followed, among the churches and convents, is a highly interesting and delightful labour. One is thus examining the links of a chain that joins the history of ancient and modern art. When painting and sculpture had no longer any professors in falling Rome, mosaic still flourished; and in a degree of perfection which is astonishing, considering the general degradation of art. It formed, with the gilded background that the latter luxury of Rome had introduced, a fine auxiliary of splendour in the Christian Basilicas, which were rapidly rising from the ruins of Pagan temples; and produced a much better effect than painting of a similar degree of excellence. It has been admitted, in the transmission of modern paintings to mosaic, that the feeblest portions of a picture gain by the sharpness and decision of the *smalti**, while the finer parts suffer by the change. Thus was mosaic favourable to mediocrity in the pictorial art, which may in some degree account for its cultivation; and the increasing demand for its practice, for some of the interiors of the churches of the fifth and sixth centuries are nearly encased in its glittering elaborations, ensured a degree of mechanical excellence, observable in many of the works of that period.

This was an art which the northern nations could never transplant; they carried away the germs of architecture, and produced their wonderful cathedrals; but the beautiful art of mosaic, remained to Italy; and such tombs and other works enriched with that costly embellishment, as are to be found in the churches and monasteries of the transalpine countries of Europe, were procured from Italy, at vast expense. Such a work is the tomb of Henry II. in Westminster Abbey.

Mosaic forms a bright episode in the decadence of art, and the degraded age of Honorius has produced some really fine works. The semi-dome of the top

* The little coloured stones of which mosaic is composed.

of the apsis or large niche, which formed the termination of the nave in the early churches, was generally filled with mosaic; the ground of which was gold, and the figures, frequently of bold design, were often of colossal size, and draped in gorgeous colours; smalts of lapis lazuli being in several instances employed for azure.

To cite a few interesting specimens in Rome, I would mention a singular chapel at St. Prassede, entirely lined with mosaic—the fine apsis at the ruins of St. Paul, and the one at St. Giovanni Laterano; but there are many others. At St. Lorenzo is some exterior mosaic; the frieze being formed of a coloured design, with a gold ground, and has a pleasing polychromic effect. In many of the finest monuments of Grecian art in its greatest age, the frieze, if left plain, was of some dark coloured marble, which served as a fine ground upon which to affix bronze or gilt ornaments*. From such hints, probably the mosaic friezes of the lower ages took their rise†. The design of the mosaics grew gradually more barbarous till the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when after a darkness of five or six hundred years, modern painting was kindled from this spark of ancient art. The earliest specimens betray their origin in the harsh outline, and in their gold background and showy colours, which did not disappear from the improved school of Cimabue, and is even occasionally discernible in the works of Giotto.

The less costly, but more beautiful and more expeditious art of painting, succeeded mosaic, (which, however, in Rome was never lost,) and Giotto and Ghirlandajo, and their followers Buonarroti and Sanzio, carried fresco to the highest pitch of excellence, covering the walls of the churches and palaces with works of genius that should be immortal, but which are already fast withering to decay. Of the first great period of fresco, namely, that of Giotto and his

* The cornice of the Erechtheum at Athens is very rich, but the frieze *plain*, of *black marble*, with marks where bronzes have been attached.

† Of mosaic as an accessory of exterior architecture, Forsyth speaks in terms of deep disgust; but could he have known that similar effects were sought and produced by the Greeks themselves, even in the Periclean age, a fact proved by recent discoveries, he would never have committed to the pages of his journal the following remark upon the beautiful cloisters of St. Paolo; for with most men of classical learning of Forsyth's time, the name of *Greek* was alone sufficient to make any thing a standard of perfection. He says of the cloisters of St. Paul, that they have twisted columns “*twisted into every variety of ugliness*,” and speaks of the mosaic with which they are enriched as “*hideous inlay*.” This classic enthusiasm drives men mad; for he imagines, because he found no gothic churches in Rome (the rage of the renaissance having destroyed them), that there never were any; and thinks that the presence of the Pantheon prevented the perpetration of such abominations in Rome, while they were so rife in the north of Italy.

contemporaries, Florence possesses the finest works. But in the period of Michael Angelo and Raphael, and the succeeding one of the Carracci, Rome is greatest, and forms in fact one noble gallery; almost every church and palace being profusely adorned with these noble works. In short, the frescoes are one of the greatest attractions of Rome, and the *Loggie* and the *Stanze di Raffaello* are among the first objects that a stranger runs to look upon as a realization of long cherished imaginings. Whether he will find them equal to his high-wrought expectation I cannot venture in all cases to determine; but many who have not been educated to the appreciation of the purest art, will not find precisely what they expected, though they may, and must eventually, admire. Of the three tiers of beautiful *loggie* or arcades round the entrance court of the Vatican, two were painted in great part by Raphael. The lower tier is decorated with the most delicately conceived arabesques, where Raphael has shown himself a colourist also; for the beautiful juxtaposition of glowing tints produces a magical effect; they are arranged with so fine a perception of harmony, that they rival the painted wing of a butterfly, or the many-coloured petals of a tropical flower. These paintings were the fruits of his studies in the subterranean halls of Titus. The Loggia above, contains the beautiful suite of pictures from the Creation to the Crucifixion, the greater number executed in all their details by his own hand, and has been called Raphael's bible. We are perhaps indebted to the wild soldier Murat for the preservation of the works of this beautiful gallery; for when he was in Rome, he noticed with regret their rapid progress towards decay, exposed as they were in the open arcades, and had them enclosed with glass at his own expense, which has checked the disposition to peel which was beginning to show itself.

The rooms known as the *Stanze di Raffaello* were built by Nicholas V. about 1450, and are a fine example of the gloomy grandeur of the palatial architecture of the period. He had them decorated with designs in fresco by the greatest artists of the day; but such was the rapid advance of art at that stirring period, that Sisto IV., who reigned from 1471 to 1484, found them already behind the talent of the day, and had them repainted. But even these works, in the gigantic strides of art at that epoch, could not long satisfy papal fastidiousness; and Giulio II., about 1505, called Raphael Sanzio to paint them again; and, until 1518, under various successive Pontiffs, he was engaged in creating the astonishing works that still remain; for the advance of art, since that period, has never yet rendered it necessary to remove them for other works. Raphael has not yet been

excelled. I cannot note all the works of these four rooms ; many of the paintings are interesting beyond the beauty of art, by the portraits of his great contemporaries which he has introduced :—Bramante—Antonio Raimondi, the rival of Albert Durer—Giulio II.—Leo X.—and, not least, the lovely Fornarina, in one or two places. One work in these rooms might even astonish an eye spoiled by the dazzling effects of Turner. Peter liberated by the Angel is a most wonderful conception of the play of light, and proves that Raphael knew how to produce striking effects of that character, when he chose to make use of them.

Another gallery of the frescoes of Raphael is that of the pretty little palazzo Farnesina. This charming building was erected for Agostini Chigo, one of the merchant princes of the fifteenth century, by Baldassare Peruzzi ; and he engaged the great Raphael to paint the spacious loggia, or porch. The banquet given to Leo X. upon the completion of this elegant villa, is celebrated by contemporary writers as one of the most splendid events of that era. Here is the beautiful story of Psyche ; and also the Galatea. Other rooms in the palace contain interesting frescoes by other hands ; but we must pass them silently, after feasting upon the divine works of the painter of Urbino.

His own casino, outside the Porto del Popolo, is literally covered with the graceful conceptions of his pencil ; the bed-room displays an endless variety of sportive fancy, in which one might imagine that a fairy had guided his hand. There are cupids balancing on poles—on horseback ; fauns and satyrs peeping from among flowers, all full of spirit and elegance ; there is a medallion portrait of his Fornarina, and a fine picture of Alexander and Roxana. Roxana is a sweet conception—so soft—so lovely ; and the little arch-looking Cupid withdrawing the few remaining folds of the veil is inimitable. *Here* is, in short, quite a school of fresco-painting ; it is however but little studied.

Many other frescoes of Raphael are scattered up and down in Rome, but I have not space to mention them, though they are well worth seeking out. But I must not quit the subject of Raphael's frescoes without referring to the *arrazzi*, or tapestries, preserved in an empty suite of apartments in the Vatican. Who has not seen the cartoons at Hampton Court, and acknowledged the high influences of triumphant art, when they have beheld those wonderful productions of genius, which the taste of Cromwell preserved to the country, at the sale and dispersion of all the other treasures of art collected by Charles I. ? Many are aware that they form but part of a suite of subjects designed for tapestry, to be executed

at the celebrated manufactory at Arras, by order of Leo X.; but comparatively few are aware that those tapestries themselves are still in existence. With one or two exceptions, the whole suite still exists in perfect preservation; displaying, in still fresh and vivid colours, the entire conception and design of all the lost cartoons. It is true that one cartoon is, in point of art, worth all the tapestries, yet the preservation of the general ideas is much; and from the tapestries one may very well judge, after having seen the works at Hampton Court, what the cartoons themselves must have been. The seven cartoons we possess appear to have been by no means the finest; for of the fifteen other subjects still preserved in the tapestry, many appear to have been still more grandly treated, and are better subjects in themselves. The sight of the tapestries stirred my enthusiasm so much, that I was almost tempted to undertake a pilgrimage to Arras, to discover the lost cartoons themselves; for they are probably still there; concealed in the lumber of some deserted closet.

Michael Angelo's great school of fresco is the Sistine Chapel; there we have, in every sense, the antagonist spirit of Raphael: the grandiose—the terrible—the astonishing, are the elements of these works; as the simple—the graceful—and the pure, were those of the gentle Raphael. The contemplation of the Last Judgment excites wonder rather than admiration; but the majestic drawing of the Sybils is, perhaps, unrivalled. But the Sistine chapel is a thing to see often, and contemplate leisurely; a few hasty words can convey no idea of its effect. The neighbouring Paoline chapel boasts also two works by the same great hand, the master of the *terribil via*; but they are nearly destroyed by the annual illumination of wax tapers in the holy week.

Advancing another century, we arrive at the last great epoch of fresco painting—whose masterpiece is in the ceiling of the Farnese Palace. This, the work of Annibal Carracci, is, perhaps, on some accounts, a more wonderful work than any we have yet seen; for, in the first place, the elaborate design of the compartments which mark the vaulted ceiling upon which it is painted, make a framework for the pictures, which unites them with better effect with the architecture, of which they form a part; and, in the second place, the extremely high and delicate finish of the pictures is such as cannot be believed possible in fresco, till seen. Of the accurate and beautiful drawing of this great work, many are able to judge by the numerous excellent prints that have been published; but the careful and exquisite execution cannot be conceived.

A scholar of the Carracci, the great Domenichino, has left many fine fresco

works at Rome ; those at Grotta Ferrata alone are worth a journey to Italy ; and several churches at Rome contain many, both of Domenichino, and his rival, Guido : but that lovely *Assumption*, at Santa Maria in Trastevere, is unrivalled, not only by Guido, but, I almost dare assert, even by any of their great predecessors. In fresco painting, after a certain time, and, in many instances, even at first, there is a kind of cold flatness, a want of the richness, and what connoisseurs call the *juiciness* of oil, that disappoints the inexperienced eye ; but in this picture the greatest warmth and richness of effect pervade every part : the ecstatic, beaming expression of the head, with its heavenly and beatified smile of rapture, is wonderful ; and the expanded arms, so exquisitely drawn and foreshortened, accord beautifully with the expression of the lovely face. But it should be seen when the sun-light is streaming through the southern windows of the ancient Basilica ; for with that peculiar light thrown upon the walls, and thence reflected upon the magic picture in the ceiling, it seems the realization of a miracle.

I have already devoted more words than I intended to my hurried sketches, or rather hints, at the frescoes of Rome ; but cannot conclude without alluding to Guido's celebrated *Aurora*, on a ceiling at the Rospigliosi Palace, and the still more famous work of Guercino at the Villa Ludovisi. These rival *Auroras* are both great works, and have each their peculiar excellences ; but, in my opinion, that of Guercino is infinitely the finest, and I should place it among the very highest productions of the art. We have no patrons to order a ceiling from a Guercino now ; and the consequence is, that with abundance of talent, the noble simplicity of the works of a high school of art is not attained, although many of the materials for a school of painting, exist among the artists of the nineteenth century, in a degree that has not been equalled since the great masters of Italy disappeared with Domenichino, Guido, and Guercino. But that domination of the middle classes in France and England, which is the great cause of patronage in art being confined to small and inadequate fields, is such a proof of increasing civilization and the general extension of competence, and even luxury, that one would not purchase painted ceilings at the cost of checking that onward march of general prosperity.

And it must also be considered that the extensive patronage created by the growing wealth of the middle classes, has been one of the principal means of raising art to a pitch it has not reached since the extinction of the great masters of Italy ; and if it does not demand great works all at once, we must not be astonished—the taste of the great, and severe, must form itself by degrees—

but it appears probable that another quarter of a century, or, perhaps, half that time, may produce a new phase in civilization, and art may be carried, perhaps, to a point it has never yet attained. The great efforts in France and Germany seem tending to such a denouement: they are before the English in the higher walks—but the English must not despair; for this advance is a forced one, produced by governments—produced by artificial stimulants, which can do nothing beyond a certain point; whilst to our independent course there is no limit; and we shall pass them at last.

CHAPTER VIII.

STUDI, ARTISTS, AND CAFE GRECO.

THE increase of the population of Rome by the continual influx of students of the fine arts is by no means inconsiderable. Germans, I think, now predominate, and are easily distinguished, as they stroll among the ruins, by their very small caps, with their very large, long, pokes or shades, their lank, hanging fair hair, and their never idle pipe, which is the medium through which a German introduces the external air to his breathing apparatus. Deprived of it, the work of respiration, it would seem, could not go on; and the consequent result need not be hinted at. The French come next in point of numbers, and are to be known by a certain wildness of air and expression, a profuse moustache, and a reckless and defying sort of address and manner, which distinguishes a particular *caste* of the youth of *la jeune France*. The *pensionnaires*, however, have a more gentlemanly appearance, though equally fierce. They are students who having received in Paris the first prizes in painting, architecture, or sculpture, in the royal academies, are, with a suitable pension, sent for three years to the *Académie Royale de France à Rome*, now held at the Villa Medici; the President of which, Ingres, a really great master of his art, has just succeeded the talented Horace Vernet. These *pensionnaires* form a sort of aristocracy of the French artists in Rome, whose acquaintance is much sought by those less lucky of their compatriots, who sketching, begging, or starving their way to Marseilles, embark as steerage passengers, and for about two pounds sterling are landed at Civitavecchia, and trudge their remaining thirty miles to Rome. When there, they exist how they can, till they have enriched their portfolio sufficiently in two or three years, to return to France, and change its contents to gold. Many of these rough fellows are youths of first-rate talent; in which latter commodity (however inferior in gentlemanly appearance) they very commonly surpass the majority of their brethren of the *Académie*.

The English are few in comparison, but of a very superior grade, as far as

education and station in society are concerned ; for but a very small minority of the French or German are *presentable*. In April there is a public exhibition, which affords some opportunity of judging of the respective merits of the aspirants to fame; and I should say, that although Paris possesses, beyond a doubt, a much greater number of superior artists than either Munich, Berlin, or Vienna, that in Rome the show was in favour of German talent. The exhibition was held in some rooms in the *Piazza del Popolo*, given for the purpose, I believe, by the Roman Government. There were some good heads by Wiedmann, a student from one of the German cantons of Switzerland ; particularly a study from the celebrated model, *la bella Genditta*, in emulation of Titian's *Flora*. Another, of her sister, also a model ; for in a city where so many are congregated for the study of the fine arts, this becomes a lucrative profession. An interesting face is worth four *paoli* per hour, equal to the whole day's labour of a vine-dresser, and if combined with a symmetrical figure, at least a *scudo* ; reaching even two or three *scudi* if the contour be particularly fine. As the model says, in Paul de Koch's graphic novel, "had my extremities been equal to my torso (throwing back his shoulders and expanding his chest), I should have been worth ten francs an hour, and possessed an income secured upon my own person, equal to that of a *deputé*."

A portrait of the great Thorwaldsen, by Horace Vernet, will become interesting to posterity, if only for the union of names in the signature: "*Horace Vernet à son illustre ami Thorwaldsen*." There were many good landscapes, but four by Marco, an Hungarian, I pronounce perfect gems ! little Claudes ! but with a firmness of finish which the painter of Lorraine could never have imparted to them in his most happy moments. They were exquisite *morceaux* ; all purchased by Thorwaldsen, who is a patron as well as a cultivator of art. If Marco honours these promissory notes, he will be the first landscape painter of the age ; but I fancy that a genius, even not quite first-rate, may often produce a few works in the flush of youth and enthusiasm, which are never after equalled. These were evidently compositions made from elaborate and careful studies from nature, about Nemi and La Riccia : nothing introduced without a previous accurate drawing, and the spots selected of such exquisite beauty, that it is difficult to say whether, even in nature, he will again find their equals. At all events, when he has left Italy, and exhausted his portfolios of Italian materials, I much question whether he will be able to originate fresh ones of equal beauty. I congratulate Thorwaldsen on his purchase, for should Marco fall back, he will possess gems (in their peculiar style of excellence), never to be equalled by any other hand ;

and if he should go on, he has the glory of being the first patron of one of the greatest artists of the age.

The next in merit was a landscape by a Norwegian student—"Wild-fowl shooting, at sunrise, in Norway"; the foreground, an expanse of clear shallow water, giving its cold green colouring to the stones and rocks beneath, executed with wonderful cleverness. At a short distance the morning mist rising from the surface of the lake becomes perceptible, concealing by degrees all the middle distance, beyond which, rises, still near enough to display execution in the detail, a white ridge of rock, catching above the mist the roseate tint of morning; an effect managed with so much art and effect, that while I was struck with its beauty, I imagined it caused by a real ray from the skylight of the room.

In an inferior rank were some landscapes, with figures introduced, by Porcelli, an Italian, in illustration of Sir Walter Scott's novels, which are just becoming the rage in an Italian dress, though I cannot say much for the translations I have hitherto seen of the *Cavaliere Gualtiero Scott*, as he is termed. Signor Porcelli's ideas of landscape are wild in the extreme; his knurly, curly, rocks, and flourishing and fanciful caverns, I should have deemed the grotesque inventions of a wild fancy, had I not seen such vagaries of nature at Terni, which most picturesque spot I have no doubt had been the scene of his studies. That singular valley was once the bed of a lake, whose petrifying waters, or rather their deposits or incrustations, have left the most curious and elaborate tracery upon those once subaqueous rocks and caves; presenting scenes as unique and fanciful as the wildest vagaries of the artist's pencil.

Signor Porcelli would prove a treasure to some fancy Japan manufactory; Jennings and Betteridge's, of Birmingham, for instance, whom I recommend to invite him over; for with that noble contempt of ordinary nature, which is the prerogative of Japan painting, he would cover their *papier maché* loo tables with a maze of fairy work of wildness and variety yet undreamt of in the smoky regions of that town of chimneys and furnaces. I trust I may be safe out of Rome ere the Signor peruses these remarks; which however are not meant to disparage, but merely to convey an idea of a species of talent which is far above the vocation I have hinted at.

Many of the German students had some delightfully elaborate interiors; among others, some charming *morceaux* from the *chiostro di Constantino*, and the convent of the monks of San Gregorio. A Frenchman had some clever sketches of the Carnival, and *croquis* of popular Roman scenes, which met the English

taste considerably : his “ *Confetti et Mocoletti*,” and a “ *passeggiata in the Villa Borghesi*,” were very clever.

The sculpture consisted principally of busts of English visitors, it being the fashion for tourists to take back their heads in marble, which were occasionally very good ; but the best specimens of sculpture are not exhibited, and are only to be seen at the *studi*. What I most admired were some beautiful groups of Italian Greyhounds, by Gom, an Englishman ; and one Greyhound playing with a Lizard—one of those shining green lizards so commonly seen flitting about the walls and roads in the environs of Rome, by a Belgian ; which though perhaps inferior in delicacy of execution to the rival works of our countryman with the euphonious name, was highly spirited, and promised much from a young student.

The *pensionnaires* of the French Academy hold their exhibitions separately, in the apartments of the Villa Medici. Their collection of pictures was small, but there was a good study or two of the naked figure, and a large composition in that cold style which is by the French themselves now called *perruque*. It is the *epoque de l'empire*, when David, and after him Girodet, and Gros, brought back painting from the frittery insignificance it had sunk into under the last Louis's, to something like good taste. But in bringing back the simple and fine forms of antiquity, they transferred to the canvas too much of the statue ; and in making *drawing*, which they had all the merit of restoring to its purity, the only object, to the almost total neglect of colour, composition, and effect, they produced some noble works certainly, but so chilled by these defects, that they meet with but few admirers in the present new phase of the art*. It is from these painters, however, that English critics have judged the modern French school ; they walk through the Luxemburg, where the great works of that epoch are preserved, and think they have seen enough to enable them to judge of the state of art in France. As well might a Frenchman, having walked through West's gallery (ere it was dispersed) have pronounced a similar fiat upon the state of the art in England.

Those who speak in a supercilious tone of the French school of painting, have surely never seen the works of Paul Delacroix, who is now covering the vast walls of the church of the Madeline, on the Boulevard, with a suite of frescoes,

* This style, however, had a peculiar charm for all whose taste had been exclusively formed by a classical education ; among whom we may reckon Forsyth, who admired the works of Mengs, which were among the poorest specimens of this taste, while he called Pietro da Cortona frigid. Pietro with all his faults is worth a thousand Mengs's. Raphael Mengs was the leader of a school of art, in Italy, towards the end of the eighteenth century, which corresponded to the one founded about the same time in France, by David and his followers.

such as modern art has not attempted since the era of the great Italian masters. They cannot have seen the works of Eugene Deveria, of Ingres, particularly his Raphael and Fornarina, and his Odalisque; of Fragonard, of Isabey the younger, and many others I could name, whose works are of the highest class of art; and in force of conception, intelligence of drawing, and vigour of execution, not to be equalled in England.

The only specimens we know in England of the modern French school, are the works of Bonnington, who during his studies in that country caught the true spirit of the present style of France; and these works were admired by those very persons who still talk all sorts of nonsense about the French school; which can only apply to the state of the arts in that country twenty years ago. English artists are living in a sort of fools' paradise, in happy ignorance of what is going on on the Continent. The reputation of the great continental artists is European; Vernet, for instance, is summoned to Asia to paint a picture for the great Pacha; whilst our greatest names are not known beyond our island limits—not even Edwin Landseer. A recent French review, speaking of the last exhibition at Brussels, expatiates with due admiration upon the beauty of the wonderful animal pictures of Verboekhoven, and looking over Europe for a rival to compare him with, can only find Brascassa: Landseer has not been heard of; and indeed few of his works, though possessing points of excellence peculiarly their own, could stand beside those of the two great artists just named. The excellence of our own school lies in colour, in which alone it stands pre-eminent and unrivalled. In sculpture we have two or three stars; but in Paris they have a host, so nearly approaching them, and in fecundity so much surpassing them, that the balance is perhaps pretty equal.

To return from this digression to the exhibition of the Villa Medici, there was only one picture whose composition was striking; the subject, "The Resurrection of the Just, and the Resurrection of the Wicked." The spirit of the just, rising from the opened tomb, meets with unquailing and enraptured gaze the benignant smile of the Angel, from whose beaming eyes, irradiate love, peace, and good will. The glittering drapery and shining wings of this Angel of reward and promise, form a fine contrast to the avenging spirit; which, on the other side of the centre, is clothed in a drapery of deep cold hue, relieved only by a belt and border of blood colour, which cuts its outline sharply out against the sable wings. The right hand rests upon the sword of justice, whilst the left fearfully beckons from a dark grave, the figure of the sinner; who rising in the shade, retains the shroud, with which he attempts to conceal his crime-stamped features, as he glances with

a mingled expression of rage, despair, and hatred, the whole subdued by intense fear, towards the majestic but frowning features of the avenger. This picture is more finely conceived than executed; but when the artist shall have made himself more completely master of the mechanism of his art, it promises fame*. Young painters must labour; without labour they cannot produce. They may imagine, but cannot realise; and in the present day, when *cleverness* of execution is more prized than even the imaginative part of the art, they stand no chance of meeting that species of success of which they are perhaps even too ambitious;—I mean the *sale* of the pictures, for that now is every thing; particularly to an English artist; in whose country, appearance, and station in society, are more esteemed than talent. For instance, if a *second-rate* painter lives in a handsome house, and keep his carriage, he is deemed fit for the companionship of the great, and a highly respectable member of society. A *first-rate* painter, occupying himself with the higher branches of the art alone, neglecting those things which produce the gold, and consequently remaining poor, and living poorly, is considered a low fellow. So take your choice, young students; live upon Michael Angelo and enthusiasm in a garret, or paint for the taste of the day, and be rich, and consequently respected. But this respect for wealth, paltry as it appears, is one of the secrets of England's present high position among the nations of Europe.

The English students in Rome rarely exhibit their works. There were but one or two little pictures from English pencils at the public exhibition, and those not works of particular note. The English come to Rome when they are in a more advanced state of proficiency; for our government does not send out *pensionnaires*. An English artist must therefore defer his visit to Italy till he has the means of paying for himself; or wait for private patronage, if he is poor and totally without means. Thus, being to some extent already a successful artist, he confines himself to those studies which are most likely to be of advantage to him on his return, and has no occasion to exhibit his works at Rome, in order to sell them to maintain himself during his stay; as is the case with the crowds of French and Germans, to whom Italy is so much more accessible†; he is more anxious to obtain the doubtful honour of being elected a member of the *Accademia de St. Luca*.

This Academy of St. Luke, to which any artist may obtain admission as a member, by presentation of a picture, was founded by Frederico Zuccari,

* There were several very accurate and beautiful architectural drawings, restorations, &c. &c.

† There are, however, some few English who manage to scramble to Rome in early life as mere students, like the French or Germans, but these are few.

who established it near the *Foro Romano*, where it is still held, and still governed by the original byelaws arranged by him; though recently slightly altered by Pius VII. The Academy is under the immediate protection of the Cardinal Chamberlain, and has its President, Vice-president, Secretaries, &c. &c. There are many presentation pictures of interest in the establishment; forming a sort of history of the art, from its foundation to the present time; but less interesting than those of the Academy at Florence, where the presentation picture was always a portrait; and where, consequently, are to be seen, the portraits, by their own hands, of nearly all the great men who have rendered the march of art illustrious, from its revival to the present time: but some of the fresh foreign interlopers are rather out of keeping with the venerable portraits that cover the walls. Two or three dandified portraits of living English artists for instance, who, having only to present their portraits, have thus, not only got among such goodly company, but enjoy the privilege of calling themselves members of that celebrated Academy; the first institution that arose amid the barbaric darkness, to foster the struggling arts. Florence, indeed, has been justly called the Athens of the middle ages.

Speaking of Academies, if I thought that any great advantage was to be obtained by early studies in Italy, I should be disposed to blame our government for not providing an establishment in Rome, similar to those possessed by every other state of any importance in Europe. Even Spain, fallen Spain, has her *Academia della bella arte* at Rome; by which students from that country are directed or guided in their studies, and facilities obtained for them which otherwise they could not enjoy. But I am of opinion that nothing is to be gained by a student in Rome which he may not attain in any other considerable capital in Europe.

If architects, for instance, want to measure, they can obtain their measurements in England; for all the best specimens have been cast and drawn and redrawn till they are known by conventional names. If painters want models (I am speaking more particularly of the English), are there not models enough in London? They can study nature, the great teacher, as well there as in Rome; and as for studying the old masters, there is a poorer collection of pictures in Rome than in any other capital of importance in Europe,—a few of the master-pieces of Raphael being the only things of importance contained in the gallery of the Vatican; and the master-piece of Guercino the only truly great work in the Campidoglio. The public and private palaces in Rome, it is true, contain a noble school of fresco; but these are scarcely the things to study by such as paint for

the present taste. In proof of the inutility of Roman studies, how many of our greatest painters ever saw Rome? (without mentioning names.) Certainly a very small minority. And how many of those who did study at Rome arrived at excellence? a still smaller proportion. No! wherever there is genius for the arts, accompanied by great industry and perseverance, there is no occasion for Rome. How were the wonders of Grecian sculpture produced? where did Phydias, Cleomenes, Glycon, Scopas, Praxiteles, study? They studied at home, and studied nature; whose beauties are not shut up in galleries and palaces, but glow around us wherever we bend our steps. In the gushing rill, in the waving reed, in the blush of morning, in the glow of sunset, and in the human form divine; no where more divine (in one sex, at all events) than in our own country*.

It is all very pleasant to go to Rome, and judge for ourselves of the effect of her sublime remains of ancient art, and feel the impression which those godlike forms never fail to impart; but to produce such forms, Rome is of no help. In further proof that there is nothing in the *air* of Rome, the native painters, put Cammucini out of the question, confine themselves to copying, in small, the favourite pictures of the galleries—the Sybil, Beatrice Cenci, La Fornarina, and a few others, which they execute at so much per dozen, for the shops that supply the English. This may be said, likewise, of the Florentines, who copy, in the same way, the Madona della Sediola, the Lucretia, or the sweet Madonna of Sasso Ferrato; and an artist's reputation is measured by his celerity. Such a one, you are told, is a good painter—he is a very clever fellow—he can paint ten Sasso Ferrato's in a week; which, as there is a great demand for pretty copies, bring him in a very comfortable income; and his success drags others after him in the same course. In fact, the visitor would never dream of buying an original modern picture in Italy, and, so far, Italian artists may plead want of encouragement; for the native patronage is small indeed. It is no longer the Italy it was, when the great villas, with their painted ceilings, and lavish decorations, were in course of operation.

In these remarks I principally allude to painters; for Rome presents many advantages to sculptors which are not to be met with elsewhere.

* Let us compare the honours and pensions bestowed by some governments upon students sent to Rome at the public expense, with the wanderings of the early Italian masters—the Raphaels, the Correggios, who in their *gir' a torno* through the different cities of Italy could derive little benefit from the sight of *works* then to be seen; but sought in ever-varying nature their only true models. Raphael came to Rome, the capital of his country (as a poor English student comes to London), with no government patronage, and with his wallet at his back. But his talent and industry soon afforded him the means of building his palazzetto near St. Peter's. And Taddeo Zuccherro, who begged his way to Rome, lived also to add his own residence to the number of her palaces.

Sculpture, afforded such powerful aid to the pomp and splendour of the Romish church, that (with the sister art of painting) it was carried to a pitch, in Italy, during the great days of popery, which it never reached in other countries. Marble was cut into colossal statues, with a facility previously unknown in modern times. One might suppose it to have been rendered soft to the chisel, and hardened by some after process—to have been “wax to receive, and marble to retain ;” and the crowds of gigantic works, of a succession of sculptors, in the churches, from Michael Angelo to Bernini, to which our own monuments are play-things, prove the greatest expertness in the mechanical part of the art. We travel fifty miles to see a marble monument in a church ; every church in Rome is a gallery of marble statues. Look at the Apostles in St. Giovanni ! Our’s is miniature marble working by the side of this. The consequence of this demand for a profusion of sculpture, was the rise of a profusion of artisans ; who, from the great artist’s clay model, could bring a block of marble to a state almost ready for the last touches of the master-hand ; and at an expense which, to mention, would appear ridiculous. Even in the eighteenth century, although the genius of the art had declined, nay, disappeared ; yet Canova, the restorer of purity and elegance of design, found these subordinate facilities still available ; and under his direction, the system of these artisans became still more certain and excellent ; and a large number were constantly employed by him in completing the orders with which the great of all Europe soon overwhelmed the restorer of his art ; and in this extensive practice, their dexterity and accuracy were carried to the highest pitch. The works of Canova struck a death-blow to the absurd prices which had been given for many inferior works of ancient art ; and, instead of bringing home some headless trunk, or patchwork statue, often newly-manufactured for the English gull, it became the fashion not to pass through Rome without bringing away a bust, or some other specimen, from the chisel of Canova, or some other rising artist ; for Thorwaldsen, and others, soon arose to claim a share in the fame and gains of the great leader.

Rome thus became a mart of sculpture ; and now one of the most favourite lounges of a lover of the arts is among the various studi of sculpture with which the place abounds. The first visit, is to the deserted and silent studio of the departed Canova. This is a pilgrimage that few forego ; although there remains nothing to interest but what is drawn from the associations which the imagination conjures up around us, on a spot once so busy with the creations of genius.

His death was an era in Italy. With the catholic passion for relics, every city was anxious to possess some portion of the departed artist. His birth-place, his

school-place, his death-place, &c. &c.—all considered they had the greatest right to his remains; and the question could only be settled by a *division*. One took his right hand, another his heart, and so on; but his body reposes in Venice, where he died; and there, too, is his monument, of which the following is the history:—

The fine old church of Santa Maria dei Frari contains some splendid monuments of the Foscari, Manini, Balbi, and other noble Venetians; but is not less celebrated as being the resting-place of the painter Titian; whose tomb, however, is only marked by a small square stone, hardly distinguishable from the pavement, upon which may be read the following flat couplet:—

“ Qui giace Tiziano Vecelli,
Emulator de' Zeuxis e degl' Appelli.”

Byron has said,—

“ 'Tis sweet to win one's fame, no matter how—
By blood or ink.” * * * *

It would appear that the Venetians preferred to all other species of fame, that won by blood; for while poor Titian, who won his with his pencil, lies beneath a plain grey stone, those wholesale cut-throats, which history is accustomed to term heroes, sleep beneath heaps of bronze and marble honours. Howbeit, the Venetians, some years ago, finding that travellers passed unheeded the gorgeous mausoleum of a Faliero or a Foscari, and bent in veneration above the humble stone of Titian, began to think it would be proper to set him up a monument.

For this purpose, Canova presented them with a model. Its execution was delayed, however, from time to time; and when, a few years since, Canova himself died in Venice, the model was executed for his own tomb. To the expenses of this tribute to genius, most of the sovereigns of Europe contributed, and Canova's grave is marked by a splendid mausoleum; but Titian's grave still remains without a monument; but if, in Venice, you seek one for him—“circumspice!”—look around! The works of his pencil are sufficient—he needs no other.*

* Canova was created Marquis of Ischia, on his return from Paris, where he had been to superintend the packing of the statues to be returned to Rome, but he never assumed the title, and spent the revenue of 3000 crowns, which accompanied the honour, in relieving indigent artists. His was an enlarged and benevolent mind, and the greater portion of the ample revenue derived from his labours was spent in acts of charity and beneficence. Among other liberal acts recorded, he built a church at his native village, on the model of the Pantheon, and wished to dedicate it to God; but this idea was not esteemed orthodox at Rome. They thought, perhaps, of Voltaire's church at Ferney, with its inscription, Deo exexit Voltaire.

From the deserted studio of Canova, you proceed to the active one of Thorwaldsen ; the living rival, and by many deemed superior, of his great predecessor. But in his female figures I have sought in vain for the matchless grace, the soft luxuriant beauty, that charm in the lovely nymphs of Canova. His greatest recent work is the King of Denmark's commission for twelve apostles, of colossal size, for a church at Copenhagen ; to which works I should very much prefer the apostles at San Giovanni ; could they be deprived of a little of the fritter that disfigures the draperies, and which was the glaring vice of the style of the seventeenth century. There are few things in his studio which give a just idea of his powers ; nothing to compare to his Jason, and other works I could mention.

There is a monument to Byron, executed for some society, which I think very poor ; and altogether my visit to the studio of Thorwaldsen was made at an unfavourable epoch for properly estimating the genius of the great sculptor, whose name now eclipses every other in Europe. At his house, however, I saw some gems, and a collection of works of art, which amply repaid my disappointment at his studio.

Near to Thorwaldsen's is the studio of Signor Bienaimé, where I saw a beautiful Pysche, executed for a Dutch count, and a Cupid, one of the most lovely conceptions I ever beheld. I saw also a variety of busts, which pretended only to be mere portraits, and whose merits as to character and likeness, not knowing the originals, I could not appreciate. This sculptor is not one of the most renowned, but I was as much pleased in his atelier as in any of the studi of Rome.

At Gibson's, the group of Hylas and Nymphs was just completed ; the nymphs have no elegance ; the forms are harsh, and the heads decidedly poor. But he was modelling a Cupid, which promised to rival some of the gems of Greek art itself. It approached the speaking simplicity of the ancients more closely than any work I have seen. He is overwhelmed with commissions—as many as will require nine or ten years to complete ; so England may not hope to rank Gibson among her sculptors at present. He seems enthusiastically attached to Rome, and as long as he can produce with such rapidity, in consequence of the facilities which the place affords, and command greater prices there than even in England—for his residence in Italy sheds a peculiar interest over his reputation—he will do well to remain. Besides, as it is, he avoids the struggle with Chantrey, Baily, and one or two others, which must take place upon his establishment in England.

I admired some monuments executing for Liverpool, his birth-place; one, a sitting figure, was particularly fine; and Gibson, who makes no mystery of the facilities of execution in Rome, ingenuously told me that it had not yet received one touch of his chisel. He had placed his clay model, or rather the cast of it, before his workman, who, at the ordinary pay of a mechanic, reduced by rule and compass the block of marble to within the 16th of an inch of what was required; leaving to the master hand, the mere play of finishing off, in some moment of happy leisure, when he felt "in the vein." This done, the inscription—Gibson fecit, Roma 183—completes the work, and it is shipped off for Liverpool or London. Thus, sculpture, to a man who has won his way to fame, is now by no means a laborious profession, particularly at Rome.

A friend who was with me, very appositely asked, if such was the system of sculpture, how it happened that the unfinished, or in fact, scarcely commenced works of Michael Angelo, were so much prized by connoisseurs, when they most likely in that state had never been seen by the master? In Michael Angelo's time, Gibson replied, the mechanism of the art was not understood as it was soon afterwards, and not executed upon those geometrical and unerring principles, which were applied with more accuracy towards the prolific age of Bernini, and not brought to perfection till the days of Canova: since which time great additional improvements have been made. So that the early stages of a work of Buonarotti were only trusted to expert pupils, superintended and aided by himself, as is clearly perceptible in the spirit of many incomplete works, quite above the genius of an artizan in their handling.

There are many Italian sculptors of excellence, whose studi I visited, and with whose works I was much pleased; those of il Cavaliere Antonio Sola, of Tadolini, of Tenerani, of Antonio D'Este, Benaglia, and many others.

There is another class of sculpture in Rome, whose studi well deserve the visits of the curious in works of art. I allude to the carving of cameos, which has been brought to such perfection here, as to discourage any attempt to establish it successfully elsewhere. The material now used is not the onyx of the ancients, but merely a shell, by which a similar effect is produced, with a twentieth part of the labour. The white secretion of the interior of the shell is left to form the object designed, while, (being pared away around it, till the brown exterior coating is reached) a back-ground of deep rich colour is attained.

Some of these shell cameos are most exquisitely wrought, and take a high rank as works of art; whilst their extreme beauty has caused so great a demand

for cheaper works of a similar description, that many of the ateliers are engaged in the *manufacture* of third and fourth rate productions, which from the rapidity with which they are executed can be offered at a price that appears quite astonishing, when we consider they are works of art, produced by the hand of skill. The shops of Paris, London, Vienna, and Petersburg, are filled with the shell cameos of Roman artists; mounted as bracelet clasps, earrings, necklaces, and a number of other ornaments. Another set of ateliers, almost worthy the name of studi, are those of the *Scarpellini*, who are entirely occupied in carving the small fragments of rare marbles, with which the soil of Rome abounds, into miniature models of Trajan's Columns, the Arch of Severus, the Sarcophagus of Agrippa, or any other relic of Roman greatness likely to attract the attention of the crowd of annual tourists. And, born among the remains of the first and finest forms that art ever gave to marble, they copy them with an elegant fidelity. Such things are a great temptation to spend money in Rome, for we cannot see so many of the attainable beauties of art, without wishing to possess them. "Rome," says Evelyn, "is most tempting for a great person, or a wanton purse;"—in short, it is one great academy of fine arts; which we can scarcely quit without carrying away a few specimens. But the Florentines rival the Romans in this latter branch, and take a large share of the trade. It has been said, that Rome has no trade except in rags, a branch of commerce carried on by the Jews, in the Ghetto. But she has a trade, and a lucrative one too, in objects of art. Her statuary, her cameos, her marble models, her mosaics, are exported to every corner of the civilized world, and form as lucrative a trade to their wholesale professors, as the cottons, and silks, and buttons, of other places. Rome is as much the emporium of the fine arts, as Birmingham of hardware and japannery.

The school of mosaics in Rome merits a more critical notice. Numerous ateliers are occupied exclusively with small works, adapted to snuff-boxes, bracelets, rings, &c. &c.; many of which are of sufficient excellence to be interesting as artistic productions; but I allude now to the great school of mosaic established in the Vatican, which, however, is not in such activity as it ought to be. Every thing dependent on government, seems to dwindle in Rome.

The mosaic pictures of the old churches form a history of the art of design through the mazes of the dark ages. And painting, at its revival, betrays the mosaic influence in its restoration; by its gold or purple backgrounds, and many other peculiarities which were not thoroughly swept away, till the genius of a

Sanzio and a Buonarrotti traced out a new and original course. But the revival of painting did not destroy its parent mosaic, which continued to be practised for church decoration ; and upon the rebuilding and decoration of St. Peter's, its durability was an inducement for its more general modern adoption ; and eventually a government school was formed for its cultivation, upon an extensive scale. A perfection has been attained in the execution of large works, which has led even the classical Forsyth to pronounce the great modern efforts in St. Peter's, superior to any works of the ancients, in mosaic. But the fact is, that though the works of the ancients in this art, are less ambitious in subject and dimensions, they are more beautifully executed than modern works ; and it may be said also, that the ancients, more fastidious in their artistic taste, would never have abandoned subjects to mosaic, which the pencil alone can treat with the most perfect effect.

The inferiority of the great mosaics of St. Peter's, to the pictures from which they were copied, is in some instances very considerable. This is the case with first-rate pictures ; whilst second-rate productions actually benefit by the change. But the principal cause of pushing the art to the extent realized in the great cathedral, may be traced to the idea of durability which such works convey, and which so well accords with the character of that immense structure, which neither does, nor ought to present any decorations which may appear perishable. I was anxious to form some idea of the expense of executing one of the largest of these works ; the transfiguration of Raphael for instance ; and found upon inquiry, that that work required nine years' labour, ten men being constantly employed ; and cost 12,000 scudi, about £3000. But a picture of very large dimensions may generally be done in six or seven years, with the labour of only one or two persons.

The slab for a mosaic picture, is formed of travertine stones of three or four feet square, and about three inches thick. They are well fastened together with iron cramps, and the mastic or cement, in which the little coloured smalti or stones are placed, is spread as required. When the whole placing is complete, and the cement is perfectly dry and hard, the entire surface, which is somewhat rough and irregular, is polished off ; and the work is complete.

The ancients used smalti formed of real stones, of natural colours, in their best works ; but modern art, in attempting more intricate subjects, has required a much greater variety of tints, and consequently artificial smalts are resorted to ; which, however, for economy, and several other reasons, are superior to the real stones.

They are formed of a species of opaque glass, coloured in general by means of metallic oxides, and seventeen hundred different shades are in use; they are manufactured in Rome, and are first formed into long slender rods, which are cut into the required lengths.

The small Venetian beads are produced in a similar way, except that the rods are hollow, and after being cut into little square pieces are shaken together in sand till the angles are destroyed.

The Roman painter Cammucini, one of the relics of the Mengs and David school, is director of the *Studio del Musaico*, in the Vatican, and has taken advantage of this situation to have some of his own cold productions immortalized by the labours of mosaic; which appears a sad prostitution of the art; for although Baron Cammucini is an amiable and clever man, and quite the greatest native artist, yet while masterpieces of Raphael and Guido are fast perishing without a record, one has no sympathy with the labour bestowed on inferior works.

The excellence with which articles of modern art have been lately produced, has quite superseded the taste for antique fragments; and the magazines of broken arms, and legs, and noses, and other morceaux, too shapeless for a name, with which Rome formerly abounded, have disappeared.

Those who would know something of the habits and peculiarities of the youth congregated in Rome, for the study of the arts, should go some evening to the *Café Greco*, the principal rendezvous of the genus; he will hear more about arts and artists, ancient and modern, Greek and Roman, in half an hour, than he could glean in his reading in a year. One night I repaired thither, and as I entered, found a tall Scotsman holding forth in Italian, upon the proportions of the columns of the temple of Jupiter Stator. Italian, with a broad Scotch accent! This alone was worth the pilgrimage. The room was as full as it could be crammed, and the smoke of the German pipes gave a fine atmospheric effect to the assemblage. I took my seat, which was a small space made for me by the politeness of two Germans, and shouting *bottega!* ordered a cup of coffee. You may cry *garçon!* for ever, and no attention is paid: waiter will not do either in Italy: *bottega* is the open cessamé at the coffee-house, like *cammeriere* at the hotel. The French were the most loquacious, and treated the greatest artistic names of the day with a familiarity quite amusing. I spoke to one rough-looking rascal, with a *barbe de sapeur*, of Horace Vernet. *Ah! mon ami*, said he, *Horace avait du talent, mais il a coulé*. It appears that his pictures of Arabs, now his

favourite subject, (every thing Algerine is popular in Paris) have been surpassed, in the opinion of the rising youth, by the sketches of a young fellow who has just returned from a residence in Algiers. David and Girodet are by general consent pronounced *perruqué*. The only man of *established* fame they acknowledge, is Paul Delacroix, just about to be married to the elegant and accomplished daughter of Horace Vernet, who, it is said, swore, like Rubens, that his daughter should marry none but a painter. The Germans say little, but are attentive observers, and signify their assent, or dissent, or doubt, by a puff; they have the puff acquiescent, the puff dissentient, and the puff doubtful. The puff acquiescent is given downward, from a small round aperture formed in the centre of the lips accompanied by a slight inclination of the head forward; the puff dissentient, on the contrary, is given upward; the body thrown slightly back, the chest expanded, and the column of smoke broader and somewhat more vehement. For the puff doubtful, the head is slightly inclined toward the right shoulder, and from the left corner of the mouth curls gently upwards, as fine as a cobweb, this dubious whiff. I soon discovered that the character of a German is as much exposed to an attentive observer, by his manner of smoking, as it would be to a phrenologist upon examination of his *bumps*, (to use a term of the scoffers). The puff dissentient, was most frequent with the bilious and pugnacious temperament; the puff acquiescent, with the credulous and sanguine; whilst the puff doubtful, proceeded generally from the colder or melancholic temperament; one of whom, like the renowned Burgomaster of New York, fell into so deep a doubt, that all the company had retired, and he was reminded that the premises were about to be closed, ere he rose with a start, and without finishing his cold coffee, or recollecting it was not paid for, walked away with an air of embarrassment which universally accompanies this *organization*. Many water-colour sketches were produced, in the course of the evening—some of considerable merit. One, was a view from the Villa Pamfili, a favourite subject, as it is the best point to get St. Peter's well into the landscape; and the sketch was pronounced by the Scotsman, to come very *square* and *nice*: he was a very merry fellow, and having all the pictorial slang at his command, was quite entertaining. A Frenchman drew forth twelve copies of the Beatrice Cenci, laughing heartily at the idea that they would all be sold to different English connoisseurs as originals. A Roman dealer—the dealers attend the *Café Greco* to pick up things of this sort—gave him two scudi each for them. *Voilà*, said my Gallic friend, pocketing the dollars, *cela est pour la cuisine*; next week must be for fame. The rest of the

evening's discussion turned upon frescoes, and a young German proposed to be my guide in Rome to those wonders of art, as he in his enthusiasm termed them, and felt all he expressed. These enthusiastic Germans are imbibing the very spirit of Raphael and Michael Angelo from the frescoes of Rome; and transferring it to Munich and Vienna; where the apartments of the great palaces are fast covering with works that promise to rival those of the great Italian eras. I could wish eventually to see English students pursuing a similar course, but the taste of the country is not yet ripe for the introduction of the great style of the Italian frescoes.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOTES ON COMESTIBLES.

SURROUNDED on all sides for many miles by the desert campagna, Rome is nevertheless provided abundantly with all that a genial clime and prolific soil can produce, though almost daily transported from a considerable distance. In this respect Rome reminds me of Venice, where every drop of that common requisite, fresh water, is brought from Mestre, the nearest point of terra firma, eight or ten miles distant : and yet no place is so well supplied with the luxuries as well as the necessities of life. Nearly 50,000 gondoliers live by their occupation of provision carriers to the ocean city.

The farmers on the confines of the campagna which begirds Rome, as the Lagune does Venice, are as industrious as the boatmen of St. Marco ; and have acquired as great skill in the construction of the light carriages which bear their produce to the Roman markets, as the former in their unrivalled gondolas.

It is a picturesque sight, every morning about seven, at the Porta del Popolo, or San Giovanni, to watch the string of vehicles, that I can scarcely call carts, arriving in quick succession at the gate ; and their drivers in their peculiar dress, settling their various *gabelle* (town dues) with the *doganieri*. These vehicles, loaded with oil, wine, olives, cheeses, butter, gourds of every description, grapes, pomegranates, and various species of vegetables, are most admirably constructed, each for its particular purpose. An English cart, while still empty, is already a load for a horse ; but an Englishman's ideas of solidity and durability in all things, however unnecessary, must be satisfied ; and so to the continued purgatory of British draft horses, (who must often curse their task-masters, if they know how things are managed on the continent) our solid, durable, ponderous carts and waggons will be persevered in as long as the reign of prejudice endures ; though by taking a lesson from the Germans, or Italians, we might decrease the labour of the horse by one-fourth, and decrease the expense of construction by

seven-eighths. For if those lighter and more convenient vehicles would perhaps not last quite so long, we must recollect that they might be renewed many times, for the expense of one good, solid, well-built, durable, but horse-killing English waggon. I cannot suppress a smile when I think how a good, solid, practical, respectable, Kentish farmer, would chuckle at my ignorance, were he to meet with these remarks.

To return to my Roman carriages. Their simplicity of construction is extreme ; two light spars of tough, well-seasoned wood, resting upon the axletree, form the shafts one way, and the body of the cart the other. If to carry wine, the space between the spars is increased laterally, so as to suit the size of the casks ; for which, if small and light, a frame is sometimes fitted, that admits of a second layer above, or even a third, if necessary. In a similar manner, fruit carts, butter carts, or milk carts, are with the assistance of a little stout basket-work, or stronger frames of wood, if necessary, adapted each in its own peculiar manner to the purpose for which it is required ; thus giving the horse only the weight of the produce to take to market, and not a ponderous cart also. Having noticed the utile, which is the grand *trait* of the cart, I must now find room for a word upon the picturesque, which is the leading characteristic of the horse-trappings and harness ; not to mention the Spanish-looking hat and *bandiera* of the driver. The mode of harnessing is inferior to ours, both in lightness and simplicity, but above all in neatness ; and yet perhaps it enables the animal to do his work with greater ease. The shafts rest upon two richly decorated branches or supports, which spring from the pad or saddle ; thus disencumbering his flanks, and leaving his motion much more free and unshackled than it could possibly be with a stiff pole suspended on either side. Then there is the immense draperied and badger-skinned collar ! which, besides its picturesque appearance, possesses perhaps other advantages. May it not bring the pressure of draft more equally on all parts of the shoulder, and never gall, as in hard work is almost invariably the case with our more light and elegant collars, by confining a continued pressure to one point of contact. Such at all events were my conclusions in these early promenades to the gates, which was a favourite lounge with me during my residence in Rome. There is a freshness in the morning that never fails to shed a corresponding gleam over the spirits ; unless indeed the feelings be dead to the beauties of nature, and that I can scarcely conceive. People may become *blazé* with the world, (the social world) the glitter of ball rooms, the tinsel of theatres ; but let such arise and go forth in the newness of the morning, and they will find that with nature they are not cloyed ; her eternal freshness, her eternal youth, has a softening charm

for the most hardened, a balm for the most depressed. In Rome the mornings are delightful, (morning is beautiful every where) and at that hour, Italy reminds one of England; there is then a briskness in the air, that the sun destroys later in the day. But the first few hours of morning recal the lively and fresh feelings that have burst upon us in the morning rambles of our early youth in our own country.

I have not done however with my carts: having descanted upon the collar, I was about to notice the plume of cock's feathers, glistening with their changeful green, black, and red metallic hues upon the headpiece of the stout, but small-made horse; and also the contrivance for the protection of the driver, who sits in front of his cargo; which pleased me much, from its primitive simplicity of construction. A strong branch of some tough wood is sought, with arms spreading off in a fan-like form, which, when covered with a badger-skin, or boar hide, the *spolia optima* of some well-remembered chase, is fixed into an iron socket in the shaft; and under shelter of this huge fan, which curls over a little at the top, sits the driver; who in this situation, with the broad brim of his hat turned up on one side, *à l'Espagnole*, to enable him to lean comfortably against his wind-protector, makes rather a picturesque appearance; particularly if he wears the scarlet *bandiera*, or sash, still very general among the peasantry of the *campagna*. This wind-protector, so necessary when the *tramontane* sweeps over those unprotected plains, is made to change sides; so that when the wind sets in, in the opposite direction, and blows a *scirocco*, it is fixed to the other shaft; and the driver, from habit, is quite as much at home on one side as the other. A head in the cabriolet-fashion would offer too much resistance, and consequently greatly increase the draught; whilst this contrivance, presenting but an angle to the counter current, is scarcely felt by the horse. Besides these advantages, let us also think of the hundreds of young painters, who journey to Rome (like Dr. Syntax), "in search of the picturesque;" and what a treasure this quaint hood must be to them in a foreground group; how capitably it would "come" in front of a market-scene. The name of a market leads me to the *Piazza Navona*: I am never long in a foreign city without making, what an American would call, a "*splorification*" for the discovery of the market-place; for in addition to the healthy, fresh-coloured faces of the picturesquely grouped peasant girls, who are generally congregated in such situations, and are always worth looking at, you see generally one of the handsomest squares in the town, and gain a much better idea of the available comestibles of the place, than you could acquire from the *chef de cuisine* of your hotel. The *Piazza Navona*, the Roman



Engraved by J. M. W. Turner

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THE PIAZZA DEL POPOLO, ROME. THE FONTANA DEL SOL, AND THE CHURCHES OF SANTA MARIA DEI MIRACOLI AND SANTA MARIA IN MONTESANTO.

market-place, is one of the handsomest, if not the most handsome square in the modern city. It possesses three beautiful fountains ; the one in the centre, with the Obelisk, designed by the celebrated Bernini, being one of the most handsome, though, by no means one of the largest pieces of fountain-architecture in the city. The *place* is of an oblong form ; the present buildings having been erected upon the ruins of the circus of Alexander Severus. On the western side, the church of St. Agnes rises upon the spot, where, as the legend informs us, the lovely and youthful martyr, after being publicly abandoned to the license of the depraved youth of Rome, was cruelly butchered by her persecutors. This church, built upon the site of a more ancient one, is the work of Girolamo Rainaldi, and is one of the finest exteriors I have seen ; resembling our St. Paul's*, though on a much smaller scale, much more than St. Peter's does ; whose exterior, as I have before remarked, gives but little promise of the gorgeous wonders that astonish the beholder within. But amid the din of cries that are deafening the crowd collected in the Piazza Navona, one is not in the state of composure best suited for the consideration of architectural beauties, or I must have noticed the *Palazzo Braschi*, one of the most spacious—but no !—I can notice nothing but comestibles. My attention is *commanded* towards the commodities of the stentorian venders. *Dodici, dodici, dodici ! dodici bajocchi la libra ! che rubba, che rubba, che rubba, che cé e-e- !* was the nearest and loudest proclamation, and I turned to see what was so vehemently offered for sale ; it was *Parmesano*, as fine parmesan cheese as a gourmand could wish to see grated over his *minestra* or macaroni, and to be purchased for the trifling consideration of sixpence per pound. Other cheeses were proportionately cheaper, as this is one of the dearest that is made in Italy ; except perhaps, the *strachino di Milano*, of delicious memory. Rome is not the most celebrated, and certainly not the best district for cheese—for what can equal that *strachino di Milano*?—yet the variety and singularity of the species of home produce to be met with, merit the particular attention of a connoisseur. *La ricotta ! la ricotta !* is the next cry ; at three half-pence the pound. In appearance and texture it is something like the new cream cheese sold in London as York cheese ; but instead of being pressed between rush mats as that is, it is turned out of a little wicker basket, like a lump of blanc-mange from its mould. It has a delightfully sweet creamy flavour, and is made from *sheep's milk* ; and when spread upon a good thick crust of genuine brown bread, I know nothing I could enjoy more after a ramble among the ruined aqueducts

* I cannot help thinking that Wren must have seen this church, or a print of it, and adapted its leading features for the façade of St. Paul's.

of the *campagna*; particularly if backed by a *fiaschetto d'Orvietto*, the champagne of the Romans; which is worth sixpence the flask, and is their *dearest* wine. But I return to our cheeses: a Roman farmer possesses no resource that he does not turn to account; for he likewise brings to market his *formaggio cavallo*, and his *formaggio di buffola*. This would make a British dairy-maid open her eyes: mare's milk! and buffalo's milk! Both however are very good. The cheeses have a somewhat spongy texture, but remarkably fine flavour, and, as they are prepared and tied up in little skins, will keep for any length of time. Then there is the *provatura*, another preparation of the milk of the *buffalo*, which is very nice in any way, but, toasted upon bread like a Welsh rabbit, is excellent. These animals are kept in great numbers for agricultural purposes; as they possess the power of three horses, whilst they scarcely consume the food of one. The *provatura* is made in little cakes of the size of an egg, and, as they serve it at an *Osteria* (a country inn), between pieces of bread threaded alternately with the little cheeses upon a thin iron spike, upon which they are roasted, make a delightful supper; of which on my road to Naples (where they are made in great perfection), I frequently partook, with the Horatian fare—

“*Castanae molles et pressi copia lactis.*”

There is always a profusion of dried fruits of all descriptions in the Roman markets; very fine raisins, though not equal to those of the Levant, at three-halfpence per pound; of which, when they first come in, a kind of compost is made, something like plumb-cake, which, from its colour, being tinted with saffron, is called *pangiallo*. This colouring is likewise adopted in the manufacture of the Genoese macaroni; which, with that of Cagliari, is esteemed finer than even the Neapolitan. Every description of this article is cheap; for the finest vermicelli, or *capellini* as it is here called, or the thickest pasta, is sold at prices not exceeding three-pence the pound. The finer sorts could not be manufactured for double that sum, were it not done by the monks, who in their lazy life, having plenty of time upon their hands, which is worth nothing either to themselves or the world, can sell it (the labour being the greatest part of the expense), at almost any price. This manufacture of vermicelli might be made the beginning of a more industrious and useful course. I should like to see the monks become merchants, and then perhaps, as great commercial companies, they might tend to change the face of things in Italy. With their craftiness and their wealth combined, they might in such a course renew the great days of the Tuscan merchants;

but they are now worse than useless, a burthen, and one that by a large class is felt and acknowledged; as is humorously illustrated in an anecdote recorded by Lady Morgan. During the French occupation of Italy, there was a discussion whether or not the monkish domain of Vallombrosa should be sold as national property to the peasantry;—the only good argument against the proposition was, that the monks inhabited those forests all the year round, thus tending to destroy and keep off the wolves, whilst the peasantry would only go to cut wood in the season. But the debate continued long and unsatisfactorily; when an impatient member of the council at last started up, saying—*Signori! o monaci, o lupi?—Lupi! lupi!* was the loud and general reply, and the wolves carried it, as the lesser nuisance. The supply of bread in Rome is excellent, that is to say, the ordinary bread; for the *pano inglese*, whitened with something to please and sell to the English, is execrable; yet, as the domestic arrangements of most English visitors are effected by the *maestro di casa*, or the *corriere*, it is very generally consumed by them: for the bakers and others who speculate upon the *forestieri*, pay these gentry (the *maestri di casa*, &c. &c.) a handsome commission upon every article purchased through their recommendation. Nicholas Poussin was decidedly right, when lighting a nobleman to the door, who commiserated him for having no servant: he, in reply, pitied his patron for having so many. How much wealth, convenience, comfort, and satisfaction, we are deprived of, in receiving all things through that distorting and adulterating medium! But this is not charity;—there are, I hope and believe, very many “good and faithful servants.” A good period to observe with the greatest advantage the ingenuity and invention of the Romans in the concoction and display of comestibles, is just before the feast of Christmas; when the Pizzecaroli begin tantalizingly to display, before the previous fast is over, the preparations for the coming feast.

Madonnas are placed outside the door, wreathed with necklaces of variously-composed sausages, and other species of gastronomic jewellery, for which we have as yet no names; they, however, are all excellent and savoury preparations. The *bazolari* set out their saints of sugar and sweetmeats, from St. Ambrose to St. Zacharia; and thus, in this annual display of good things, do the devout dealers adroitly mingle business with devotion, and contribute equally to the piety, and the feasting, of the Christmas week; in the punctual observation of which latter duty, we are ourselves still good Catholic observers.

The display of fruit on my first visit to the Piazza Navona, in the month of October, was superb!—huge heaps of pale and purple grapes,

and might be purchased at one halfpenny the pound. This supply, slightly increasing in price, lasted till Christmas. After which, several early fruits appear, which *we* do not know, or make no use of. Such, for instance, as the pignoli, or kernels from the stone pine, and the green almonds, which, when they are about the size of dates, are eaten with salt at dessert. They have somewhat the appearance of a green apricot, but a little flatter, and are not dissimilar in taste; but as you bite into the kernel (for the coat and shell are all green and soft together) there is a fresh delicious bitter, which I never tasted, but in green almonds. What would Dr. Philip, or any other regimen-tal author of books on diet and digestion, say to a bowl of this fruit placed before him? would he not, like Accum, see “death in the pot”? And yet I have known Italians eat at least a quart of them after a hearty dinner, and feel none the worse. The fact is—from what cause is perhaps difficult to ascertain—*dyspepsia* is, comparatively speaking, unknown in Italy, and, I may add, in France, where the mode of living is somewhat similar. In alluding to the continental *cuisine*, we are in the habit of talking of *foreign messes*, *trashy cookery*, and *unwholesome diet*; whilst the fact is, that the Italians and French, although great eaters, know nothing of indigestion. An English M.D., staying in Rome for his health, told me he was astonished to find no diseases arising from indigestion prevalent among the Italians; adding, that such a dinner as he had just seen a Roman gentleman “cram into his stomach,” was enough to *kill* two Englishmen; and he concluded with an eloquent anathema against oil, garlic, and all foreign “messes.” If these things are so pernicious, how happens it that in England, almost the only European country where they are unused, indigestion is the plague of the land. All those patent medicines, the advertisements of which daily crowd our newspapers, are unknown and uncalled-for elsewhere. England alone is the emporium of patent medical compounds, three-fourths of which profess “stomachic properties of the most strengthening description.” We have the “Digestive Pills”—“Compound Tincture of Ginger and Camomile”—Stirling’s Stomach Pills—Davey’s Dinner Pills—and, in short, a list long enough to fill the rest of my note-book at one sweep. How is this? It cannot be our plain beef and mutton, of which simple fare I have the same elevated opinion as any of my countrymen; nor is it our ale and porter. But there are *English* as well as *foreign* messes. It is not the roast beef; no; but I am not quite so sure that it is not the plum-pudding. Talk of *foreign messes*! Let us only look at the diabolical composts that are concocted in England under the denomination of “*puddings*”; and, at the head of the list, *plum-pudding*. Observe the ingredients that are thrown into the cauldron: eggs –

lemon peel—fat—dried grapes—flour—brandy—candied orange peel—sugar—cinnamon—milk, &c. &c.—and this dread mixture must, for six or eight hours,

“ In the cauldron boil and bubble ;”

And then, to go on with the same g eat authority,

“ Then the charm is *firm* and *good*.”

I refer to Mrs. Glass for further particulars ; for Louis Eustache Ude has not, I believe, meddled with the subject. Then come, apple pudding, and gooseberry pudding, *et id genus omne*, encrusted with their masses of boiled flour and fat. Following in the train, though at an humble distance, come batter puddings, custard puddings, Norfolk dumplings—“ I’ll see no more !” Good heavens ! talk of *foreign messes* ! why, if the bill of fare I have given is not sufficient to create the brisk demand for the patent digestive medicines, I do not know what is. Doubtless, there are other causes ; but, *sans badiner*, “ puddings” and “ patent medicines” being both peculiar to England, and unknown, or at least comparatively so, on the Continent, lead me strongly to infer that their singular co-existence in our “ favoured land” may be accounted for very naturally, by supposing the consumption of the former to create the demand for the latter.

There is a good supply of beef in Rome during the winter months, produced in the district of Perugia, where they have a fine breed of long-horned cattle, of that beautiful pearl-gray variety peculiar to Italy. This colour darkens to a deep slate colour on the back, and fades gradually to white towards the dewlap and belly. Immense droves of them come down between October and December, to supply the increased demand caused by the annual influx of sixty or seventy thousand strangers at that season. I have often watched a line of them winding across the campagna, followed by their mounted drivers, who are armed with long spears, used to urge them forward if necessary, or occasionally as a defence ; for some of them are very fierce. The picturesque effect of these herds, and their drivers, was not lost upon Horace Vernet, who, while President of the French Academy at Rome, painted one of his most interesting pictures from this subject ; two mounted drovers pursuing a refractory and infuriated bullock. The slaughter-houses, or, to use a refined term, the *abattoirs*, were formerly within the walls ; but many accidents occurring, it was, a few years since, arranged that all meat should be killed at the newly-established abattoir, outside the Porta del

Popolo. This was, I believe, a reform of Leo XII., who, at the same time, turned out the English Protestant church, as another nuisance in the holy city; considerately allowing the heretics, however, to re-establish themselves near the new slaughter-houses.

The butchers have a mode of proceeding "in cutting up," quite different to ours. After dividing the carcass into four or five grand masses, the rest is quite *ad libitum*, according to the taste of the buyer. A purchaser is asked how many pounds he wishes, and where he will have it (the price varies with the part, and proportion of bone); and he receives a square lump, or a lump of any other geometrical figure he may fancy, just where he chooses. There are no back loins and sirloins, short ribs and long ribs, fillets, rounds, rumps, barrons, saddles, spare ribs, haunches, or conventional joints of any other denomination. This, at first, appears confusing: you cannot order a leg of mutton or a sirloin of beef, and have your commands executed without further trouble, it is true; but, much better than that, you can have a piece cut precisely where and how you like—an advantage by no means enjoyed by us; for where all is once divided into certain understood joints, your cook must take them as they are, whether they suit or not; it is usual to cut them so, and they cannot be changed. But I must leave Messrs. Giblet and Co. to controvert this point with Signor Grossapanza, of the Corso, and should much like to see the correspondence. The supply of beef, which is so good as long as the Perugian beasts are to be had, suddenly ceases about April, the season when most visitors leave Rome; and the meat is very indifferent from that time till the ensuing October. How it is that the Romans do not contrive to get a good supply for themselves during the summer months, I do not know; it would seem that they cannot appreciate the difference, and yet, in their own way, they are great epicures. The mutton is always indifferent: the beauty of the flocks that once browsed the velvet banks of the Clitumnus is heard of no more; and I would recommend an invalid, who wishes a light dinner, to beware of a Roman mutton chop.

The fish market, which is well supplied, is held partly among the tottering columns of the Portico of Octavia, and partly upon the Piazza della *Rotunda*, the modern appellation of the celebrated Pantheon of Agrippa. The *spicola*, a fish somewhat resembling salmon in shape, but differing in the colour of the flesh, is considered one of the greatest delicacies; but I prefer the *trillet*, a small red-scaled fish, resembling mullet. They are usually fried in oil, but served up quite dry, with the exception of the juice of a fine fresh lemon or two expressed over them, and are—delicious! They have river fish, too, which are taken in

the Tiber, of the chub species, which, cooked *alla Romana*, are very excellent; but the onions, oil, and garlic, used in the dish, would at first frighten an Englishman out of his wits, or, at all events, his appetite. He would prefer the *cefalo* (grey mullet), which they simply broil, and of which there is great abundance. Some small fish are taken in the neighbouring lakes at certain seasons, which are very delicate; the *lasca* in particular, which is fried without opening, the inside being considered the best part. The intestines somewhat resemble a few convolutions of vermicelli; and, imparting something of the same flavour to the fish, have given rise to the cry, *la lasca! la lasca! col maccheroni dentro*. Then the shell-fish—the *frutti mare*—are abundant, and of many species unknown except in the Mediterranean; and there are various molusci which make excellent stews, and are much sought by gourmands. It would be endless, however, to make a list of all fish to be procured in the Roman market; suffice it to say, there is variety enough to suit every taste; yet, despite this profusion, I once tasted at Venice some *frutti mare* of the Adriatic, which surpassed all I have yet partaken of from the list obtainable on the Piazza della Rotunda.

I have mentioned, I think, most of the articles ministering to the *table*, that may be considered as peculiarly Roman, except the wines; which are good, various, abundant, and cheap. I scarcely know whether they would please a palate too long inured to those potent liquids, port and sherry; but to all who can feel satisfied with pure natural wines, there are many which cannot fail to be agreeable, though none are celebrated, and few equal to the prime wines of other parts of Italy, which are to be found, with one or two exceptions, at the foot of the Alps, or among the Neapolitan and Sicilian growths; although the latter are too fiery and inflammatory for my own taste. The Orvieto is grown at some distance from Rome, on the Sienna road; and as the volcanic environs are very picturesque, particularly about Bolseno, where a crystal lake fills the crater of an extinct volcano, almost as round and smooth as a punchbowl, many Roman parties are made in the summer, to drink the Orvieto wine at its growth-place; where, on account of the *gabella* it pays on entrance into Rome, they obtain it for about half the price that is charged to them at home. This is, as I have said before, the champagne of the Romans, and is a sparkling and delicious wine; possessing more fruitiness, yet greater delicacy, than champagne. It has not however, sufficient stamina to bear carriage; scarcely sustaining the shock of removal even to Rome, less than thirty miles distant; so that those who would taste a flask of Orvieto, must make a pilgrimage to its native vineyards, or to the holy city. Of the ordinary table wines, many are made upon those seven hills of Rome, once

busy with their crowded thousands, and now occupied by silent vineyards; though still within the walls. I had a barrel from the Franciscan monks on the Esquiline; a good and pleasant red wine, which my landlady pronounced, and she was by no means a contemptible judge, a *bichier' di vino stupendo*. Nearly all grown within the walls, or in the immediate vicinity, is red, the white grape not succeeding so well in that soil; but these wines are little esteemed, and, indeed, much finer qualities are grown on parts of that chain of rocky hills which, commencing at La Riccia, form a grand semicircle round the desert *Campagna di Roma*, and rise into mountains towards Rieti and Terni. The white wine of Frascati is very pleasant, but does not bear well the removal to Rome. That of Monte Compatri is stronger, almost equal to Bucellas, and is one of the best wines in general consumption; selling in Rome as high as three-pence, or even four-pence, the *foglietta* (about a quart), whilst inferior wines, quite equal to a great deal of claret imported to the London market, may be had at one penny the bottle. At Genzano, between twenty and thirty miles from Rome, on the Naples road, a delicious sweet wine is grown, equal to the finest Lisbon I ever tasted. It is commonly sold in the village at two-pence per quart, but can scarcely be placed among the list of the wines of Rome; as, from some want of care in the making, (certainly not want of stamina) it does not admit of removal. If it could be produced so as to bear a sea voyage, which, with care and the application of a little more science in the principles of making, it no doubt would, it is a wine that would find many amateurs in England; and, provided there were no duties, this delicious beverage might be sold there at a lower price than small beer!

CHAPTER IX.

PALACES, VILLAS, FOUNTAINS, &c.

I CAN scarcely begin to note down my impressions respecting the dwellings of the Roman nobles, and the ruins from which their most precious materials were torn, without saying something of their inhabitants; but so much has already been both rumoured and written upon the society of Italy, and upon the manners, customs, and pursuits, as well as morals of Italians, from one end of the peninsula to the other, that I will abstain from adding to the mass; and thus avoid the disagreeable task of unsaying (not to use the harsher term, disproving) much that has been advanced on that subject; and, frequently, by those who had the least opportunity of judging. Those who would know more of the matter I refer to the graphic pages of Beckford, the lively descriptions of Lady Morgan, the entertaining diary of Matthews, &c. Avoiding this part of the subject, I may, however, still say something of the origin of the existing nobility of Rome, at the head of which, unquestionably, stands the house of Borghesi, of Genoese extraction; though, in point of mere wealth, perhaps the Piombini take the precedence, in whose present representative are centered the honours and estates of three other great families; namely, the Ludovisi, the Buoncompagni, and the Ottoboni; besides which, the principality of Piombino, when sold to the grand Duke of Tuscany, produced the prince a sum in itself a treasury. Some others of the leading nobility are, the princes Ruspoli, Rospigliosi, Barberini, Braschi, Panfil-Doria, Altieri, Sciara Colonna, Sforza Cesarini, and Massimi; the two latter of whom claim lineal descent from ancient Roman stock, and assert that the blood of the Cæsars still flows in their veins.

Many of the old historic names of the middle and lower ages, the Conti, the Orsini, the Lancelotti, the Frangipani, are still found, but generally among the inferior nobility; and the heads of many of the greatest families, during the predominance of the imperial interest, settled in Germany, and their descendants are now to be found ranged among the harsher names of the Austrian aristocracy.

Nearly all the nobles of Rome, who are now really great and wealthy, derived their importance from the Popes who were fortunate enough to fill the papal chair in those palmy days of popery, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The last of the Popes who possessed much temporal power and influence, was Pius VI., whom the French revolution surprised in the possession of the see of Rome. His subjection gave the final blow to the sinking splendour of the triple crown, and the cardinals now elect, not one of the aristocracy, to make a fortune, but one whose origin places him under the control of the *sacro collegio*, and in whose name they can dispose of a cardinal's hat, or other patronage, among their own connections and interests. Such is said to be the case of the present Gregorio XVI.

The old baronial names are so completely eclipsed by the system of nepotism which enriched the families of each successive Pope, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that they scarcely enter into the list of the modern leading nobles; and I therefore mention in preference the date of the rise of a few of the great families who owe their elevation to papacy and nepotism.

In 1605, Borghesi, a Genoese, was elected Pope, as Paul V.; during whose pontificate the estates of the Cenci were confiscated, under tragic circumstances, which are too well known to need repetition. Since that period, the Borghesi family has been considered one of the first of Rome; and few strangers are aware, whilst they take their evening drive through the enchanting groves of the beautiful villa, that now bears this name, that they are upon the patrimonial estate of the unfortunate Cenci, oft traversed by the fair Beatrice, whose charms still live in the soft touches of the pencil of Guido, and whose fearful history has been made familiar to our nation by the impassioned drama of Shelley.

The importance of the Barberini may date from the election of one of the family to the Popedom, under the name of Urban VIII., in 1623; that of the Pamphili, from Innocent X., 1664; of the Rospigliosi, from Clement IX., 1667; of the Altieri, from Clement X., 1670. To similar events may be traced the origin of a majority of the present wealthy families of central Italy, who have nearly all of them Palazzi in Rome. Having ventured the above somewhat hasty, and rash conclusions, as the result of my own imperfect researches, respecting the Roman nobility, I come to the subject of this memorandum—their habitations. It was the custom of a pope, as soon as he was elected, to commence a splendid Palazzo, which became, as it were, the escutcheon of his family, and descended to his “nephew,” who was, not unfrequently, a natural son. Thus the 300 churches of Rome are surpassed in number by her more

than 300 palaces; for every *nipote del papa* had his palace, while it was not every pope who built a church. Vasi enumerates sixty-five palaces, possessing considerable architectural beauty; and the student might select perhaps a dozen, which, as masses or in parts, are among the most perfect productions of modern art in the palatial style.

These palaces form, in fact, from the era of Brunelleschi to that of Bernini, a complete school of art, just now beginning to be appreciated, and which such works as Donaldson's *Doorways*, &c., are making known, though too slowly, to the English student who has not the opportunities of travel. Solidity is the marking character of the architecture of these palazzi. A massive doorway (a carriage entrance) admits at once to the foot of the grand staircase, which rises from either side, and conducts to galleries which surround the court (of which the palace itself forms the four sides), upon which open the entrances to the apartments. The front of the palace is always in a line with the street (the Farnesi being the only detached palace); from which circumstance the elevations perhaps lose much of the effect they would otherwise produce; and as in the heyday of Roman palace-building, no accommodation for foot passengers was contemplated, the streets are narrowed by precisely the width which the trottoirs should have occupied. From this circumstance, the Corso (an avenue of palaces) appears narrow, and loses that spaciousness of effect which is all it wants to make it the finest street in world.

An objection has often been made to the great doorways and open staircases of the palaces of Rome, on account of the filth which not unfrequently accumulates there; but this is not the fault of the architect, but of the slovenly noble, who keeps no porter, or *Svizzero*, at his gate, to protect his house from such pollutions. In Genoa, where a similar construction prevails, no such inconvenience is observed, as the great doors are either kept closed, or are protected by a porter; and such, indeed, is now the case with many of the best houses of Rome. Though it was a fashion for every Pope to commence a palace with his papacy, yet, as the Popes were generally old men when elected, they frequently died before the palaces, which were to serve, in some sort, as their monuments, were completed. When this was the case, the building was commonly suffered to remain unfinished. This was the fate of the celebrated Palazzo Farnesi, perhaps the finest in Rome; to erect which Cardinal Farnesi (afterwards Paul III.) effected the destruction of the Coliseum, from which he tore the materials for this most princely residence. In a similar manner perished many interesting remains which time and the Goths had spared; and from similar devastations arose, at a later period, the Palazzo

Barberini, which gave rise to the pasquinade, "*Quid non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini.*" There are still many prints existing of beautiful monuments of antiquity, the relics of ancient Rome, which had withstood the warfare and shock of ages, till within two or three centuries of our own times, and some that were nearly perfect only a century ago, of which no vestige now remains ; and it is curious to reflect that, had our own venerable antiquarian, Stowe, visited Rome, even in his day, we might have known much of the architecture of the Romans which is now buried for ever from both the antiquarian and the student.

If a cardinal or a noble had interest at court, he found no difficulty in obtaining permission to pull down an ancient temple, in order to use up the stones and precious marbles in the erection of, perhaps, a range of stabling : or, perhaps, the columns alone were wanted, for some more decorative purpose ; in which case a splendid mass of architecture was as ruthlessly thrown down, in order to tear away its valuable supports. Previously to the light which broke upon literature and the arts, about the era of Leo X., this was still more common ; and it may safely be calculated that every building in Rome of any consequence, erected anterior to that date, is of classic stone. This was the more unpardonable, as the same purpose might then have been effected without spoliation ; for when we consider that the ancient pavement of Rome still lies, in many parts, beneath twenty feet of fallen ruins, it is clear that the abundance of building materials, at that period, must have been almost incredible ; and the barbarous cupidity of the nobles, in pulling down the superb remains, yet erect, in all their majesty, before they had half exhausted the mighty masses at their feet, admits of no excuse.

Some of the palaces built at the period which may be termed that of the resurrection of Roman art, are extremely beautiful. It was an era when the mighty minds of Dante and Petrarch, and the gayer one of Boccaccio, that illustrious triumvirate of intellect, had given an impetus to the spirit of the time, which was felt like an electric shock through every channel of the arts. It was then that Brunelleschi, following up and correcting the fanciful, yet elegant, genius of Giotto, and the bolder, though perhaps wilder spirits of Arnolpho di Lapo and Orcagna, originated a style, which, without retaining any of the *principles* of the Gothic (if the term may be so used), displayed much of the *feeling* of that era. Brunelleschi combined the purity and simplicity of classic architecture with the lightness of that which rose upon its ruins, and conceived his designs with a freshness and originalty of feeling which was the distinguishing character of his age.

With Brunelleschi arose the elegant taste, which has been since called the cinquecento, and which was carried to its greatest perfection by his immediate follower,

Bramante. It is a style, or rather manner, which, although deprecated by many able architects, as more the offspring of the sister art of painting, than of the sterner genius of architecture, must ever be admired for its graceful symmetry, the beauty of its delicate and inimitable arabesques, and its felicitous appropriateness to the higher classes of domestic architecture. It appears to be eminently suited, in many respects, to the luxuries, or rather wants of the present day, in our own country.

There was in the classic architecture of Greece, a coldness, which was its most striking attribute. Born in the East, and nourished to its perfect growth beneath the glowing sun of Greece, its deep porticoes and projecting cornices were contrived for shade, for protection from the heat, and to convey that effect of repose and coolness which is so delightful in a hot climate.

The ancient Romans, with the literature, adopted the architecture of Greece, but without adapting it to their cooler climate; as we may adopt many customs of the gayer French, through fashion, which are ill suited to the graver character of our nation. But at the *renaissance* of the arts, after a long lapse of darkness, the Grecian was no longer fashionable in Rome: Greece was forgotten; and the genius of the age originated from the relics of ancient art existing in the remains of the imperial city, a style eminently suited to the climate and the age. The architecture of the North, in contradistinction to that of the East, possessed a warmth of effect, and was contrived for shelter, for protection from cold, and to convey, in its rich and varied traceries, in its fretted recesses and clustered columns, an effect of richness and comfort in keeping with the enjoyments of northern nations. It was a union of the effect of this style with the cooler beauties of that of classic art, that produced the *cinquecento* at Rome. It combined the majestic beauties of the classic models still existing there, with the more compact and domestic tone of the Tedescan. In the more northern capital of Tuscany, the amalgamation partook more strongly of the Gothic; and when, a century later, the march of reviving art reached the fair plains of France, in the reign of Francis I., the climate and feelings suggested a still stronger admixture of the Gothic arrangement. When it eventually stretched into England, again half a century subsequent to its reaching France, the changes it produced were at first merely confined to ornament and detail. Without changing the construction of our Gothic halls, we merely surmounted their clustering columns with a mongrel species of Corinthian capital, or effaced our crockets and tracery, to make room for a scroll of acanthus; producing the strange, but rich and not unpleasing mixture, which antiquaries now admire as the Elizabethan, or British semi-Gothic.

The two palaces in Rome which best illustrate what I said of the elegant style of Bramante, are those of the Cancelleria, and the Palazzo on the Piazza Scossa Cavalli, near St. Peter's, now belonging to the rich banker, Tolonia; both by Brabante. The latter was built for Cardinal Adriano Corneto, and became afterwards the residence of the ambassadors of England. The first of these, was, like so many others, built with travertine torn from that mighty mass the Coliseum; and aided likewise by the demolition of a triumphal arch of Gordian. This style was, by the great painter Raphael, and the architects Maderno, San Gallo, and others, carried nearer the classic model, at the expense, perhaps, of some of its delicate elegance. The path of Michael Angelo must be considered alone: without departing from the feelings excited by the impulse already given, his original genius brooked neither the restraint of the cinquecentisti, nor the severer rules of ancient art; but, in a bold and picturesque manner, he struck out of both, so that his works cannot be brought in as examples, in a chronological view of the march of art, but rather form a brilliant episode, unconnected with the general thread. Perhaps the best examples of his style are the Palazzo Farnesi, splendid yet simple, with its magnificent cornice, which an eminent architect of the present day has designated as "a noble crown to a noble mass;" and the Campidoglio, the residence of the senator or chief magistrate of Rome, which occupies the site, and indeed rises upon the foundation, of the ancient Capitol. In speaking of this period of architectural art in Italy, the reflection (almost inconceivable in this age of railroads and rapid communication) occurs, that, whilst the almost classic pile of St. Peter's was majestically rising in Rome, we, of the frigid north, were still busy with the pointed windows and groined roofs of our cathedrals. That while the workmen were chiseling the Corinthian capitals of the gigantic columns of the Roman cathedral, we were just adding that morceau of petrified Brussels lace, Henry VII.'s Chapel, to Westminster Abbey; with all its frettery, tracery, monkeys, dragons, owls, and nondescripts; the wild fancies of the legend-pregnant north—the land of witches, fairies, and hobgoblins.

In short, nearly two centuries elapsed from what has been termed the revival of art in Italy, ere the shock, or rather influence of the change, was felt in England.

To complete the slight sketch I am endeavouring to trace of the progress of Italian architecture, I may state that a richer, and perhaps overcharged style prevailed to some extent, immediately after the age of Michael Angelo, influenced or produced by the grand, though irregular, efforts of that colossus of the arts. The most beautiful specimen of the style I allude to is, perhaps, to be found in the Palazzo Madama, built by Cigoli, for Catherine de Medicis. This palace has a rich, and, at the same time, noble and majestic effect, and is the last which pre-

sents the peculiarities incidental to the revival of art. I may here remark, that one of the great and striking peculiarities of this period was the facility with which each architect might be recognised by his manner of invention, and by the character of his finishing touches: every work was, as it were, an original picture, in which the peculiar hand of the architect was ever evident. Thus proving that the art was not yet reduced to a matter of rule and compass, but was still under the dominion of the genius and fancy of the architect.

Another period succeeded: the works of Vitruvius were discovered; and the rules and measurements he laid down being within the most ordinary capacity, the inspirations of original genius gave way to servile copies of the ancients, and invention and fancy were alike discarded. Another and more conventional style arose, in which all architects became more alike. Giacomo della Porta, Domenico Fontana, &c., and at their head Vignola, have left some of the finest specimens of this manner, which, founded entirely upon the principle of the ancients, with their bolder projections and massive columns, produced a more imposing effect for public buildings than the cinquecento, but was, in my opinion, much inferior for domestic or palatial edifices. Rome, however, presents numerous and fine works, both public and private, in this taste; which was still more tamed down in ornament, and conventionalised by Palladio, and prevailed till the Louis Quatorze style, rendered popular by the great talents of Le Brun, spread all over Europe, corrupting the simplicity of ancient art, and finally leading to that *mesquin* and meagre taste into which the arts fell, all over the continent towards the beginning of the eighteenth century. In Italy, however, this fall was not so profound; for Palladio, in the north, and in Rome, Bernini, (that last of the race of those great sculptor-painter-architects, who have illustrated the history of art in Italy alone) have left such models of a magnificent, if not pure style, as afforded the last props to declining taste. It has often occurred to me, that at the revival of the arts, when the impulse was given by Brunelleschi, Bramante, and Michael Angelo, it would have been well could every remnant of ancient architectural art have been swept away. The arts of civilization had received the necessary impetus, and a new style was originated, which, left to itself, might have produced a sublime, and, at the same time, picturesque architecture, of which we can now have no idea. At all events we should have had no miniature caricatures of temples placed by way of what is called a portico, (a term often used in a wrong sense) at the entrance of the most inferior dwellings. Nor should we have had Grecian doric, from "accurate measurement of the temples, taken on the spot," introduced in porters' lodges or dissenting chapels. If we must have copies,

why cannot we choose as models some of the fine palazzi of Rome, which would surely be more appropriate to buildings of a private or domestic character, than a copy of a pagan temple, or even a christian cathedral? On the monumental style, I have ventured some few remarks, in my rambles among the churches of Rome.

In taking for models some of the early palaces of modern Rome, the beautiful *façades* of which are admirably suited to residences of a superior class, or to club houses, and other buildings ministering to the luxury of the times, we might originate a school, which, followed out (not servilely, but imaginatively) might create for us a national architecture, and one that would be far better suited to the wants and tastes of the times, than any thing that either the Grecian or the gothic style can supply. It would be a purer and more poetic admixture of ancient and modern art than the Elizabethan manner, or that of any other period or country of Europe. And, if any one should be so hypercritical, or fastidious, as to prefer against these models the crime of not being purely classical, I may reply that they are most probably fine imitations of ancient art, of the kind which ought alone legitimately to be copied for such a purpose; namely, dwelling houses: for even so recently as the sixteenth century, there existed in Rome vestiges of the domestic architecture of the ancient Romans. Among others, part of a small palace of Domitian; which remains may have suggested the style of the cinquecentisti; and if so, it must surely be in better taste to design our domestic buildings from ancient remains of a similar character, than to reduce and caricature their temples, by attempting to adapt them to purposes for which they were never originally designed.

In speaking of the palaces of Rome, I have hitherto confined my remarks to those possessing architectural pretensions, or those remarkable for the barbarous spoliation which afforded the materials for their erection. I have mentioned none historically; for which omission, although my intended limits are nearly filled, I will endeavour to make some amends, by saying a few words of the Vatican—the *Palazzo Apostolico del Vaticano*; that spot on which long hung the destinies of Christendom; and whence those bulls, excommunications, or indulgences issued, which once carried war, wretchedness, or vice, over the fairest region of Europe, to forward some paltry intrigue of popery, or to cement some family compact, or promote the private interest of a Pope. But this is the dark side of the question: there have been few Borgias: many good men have swayed with equal-handed justice the thunders of the church; and where has great and irresponsible power been conferred, which has not, at some period, been abused? The Vatican was not the original habitation of the Pope: the links of that papal chain, which once

enfettered Europe, were riveted at the Lateran, the residence provided for the head of the church, by the converted Constantine ; and it was not till after the removal of the papal chair to Avignon, and the subsequent return of the popes to Rome, that the Vatican became their principal residence. Originally there existed upon this spot only a few scattered dwellings the residences of the priests who officiated at the neighbouring Basilica of St. Peter's. There is a record, however, of some repairs done by San Simacco, to the "*palace* adjoining St. Peter's," as early as 499, scarcely more than a century and a half after the establishment of the religion by Constantine ; and Eugenius IV. in 1147, rebuilt it with sufficient splendour to serve as the residence of Peter II. of Arragon. Since that period it has been repaired and added to, by various hands, at various periods. The great court, which was the splendid work of Bramante, was sufficiently spacious to hold a tournament in, on the marriage of Count Attemps, *il nipote del papa*. But it has been since divided into two, and spoilt. The principal part of the palace now visible from the Piazza di San Pietro, forms three sides of a court, open on the side next the splendid piazza ; displaying four tiers of galleries, or open corridors. The second of these having been decorated with beautiful arabesques, and medallions of scriptural subjects, by Raphael, bears his name—la Loggia di Raffaello, and is now enclosed with glass, to preserve as long as possible those too perishable works.

I think I have already stated that the usual form of a Roman palace is a quadrangle, containing a spacious court in the centre, and surrounded by galleries similar to the loggie I have just mentioned ; from which, doors communicate to the apartments. The entrance from the street is by a carriage doorway, to enable company to be set down at the foot of the grand staircase, which ascends from the right and left to the first gallery, communicating with the *piano nobile*, or principal floor ; the ground floor never being used, except for inferior purposes. In the vast mass of the Vatican, however, this disposition was not always adhered to in the various additions, which have in the course of ages added court to court, and wing above wing, to the building, till it has nearly overtopped its neighbour, St. Peter's, and in some degree injured the symmetry of its effect. There are at present twenty courts, with their colonnades ; eight grand, and two hundred small staircases ; and separate apartments without number ; and its actual dimensions exceed those of the Louvre and Tuilleries united, although it covers less ground. Its entrance is by the splendid staircase of Bernini, which rises from beneath the grand colonnade of St. Peter's, where carriages set down to attend the papal levees, and the great *funzione* of the Sistine

chapel, which is one of several contained within the precincts of the palace. Some of the apartments are very splendid and interesting, particularly those of Alexander Borgia, from the rare and peculiarly elegant taste of the ceilings—magnificently rich, and yet so simple. There are also the apartments of Giulio II., now called *le camere di Raffaello*, which Evelyn, though he found the Swiss guards drinking and smoking there, declared the most truly royal apartments in Europe. The splendid library is contained in a suite of magnificent apartments: and these, in conjunction with its matchless galleries of ancient art, its superb chapels, and its great adjunct, St. Peter's, (combined with its position, affording a splendid panorama as far as the hills of Tusculum, more teeming with glorious association than any spot on the earth), place the Vatican, without doubt, at the head of European palaces.

The casual mention of the ceilings of the Borgia chambers has suggested to me another point of comparison between the palazzi of Rome and the town residences of the English nobility, much to the disadvantage of the latter. In the interior decorations of a Roman palace, the principal ceilings were ever the most prominent feature, and the first talent of the day was employed in their design and pictorial embellishment. Annibal Carracci was many years employed upon the ceiling of the Farnesi Palace; the celebrated Guido, at that of Ruspigliosi; Pietro da Cortona, at that of the Barberini; and Guercino produced the acknowledged *capo d'opera* of fresco painting, (his *Aurora*) on a ceiling at the Ludovisi. In London, there is in no private residence, with a few miserable exceptions, any painted, or even highly decorated ceiling; yet nothing would add so much to our first-rate mansions as the enrichment of this feature. We make Gothic or cinquecento walls or windows with tolerable accuracy, but the crowning glory of the rich taste of the middle ages, the arched and richly emblazoned ceiling, is lost sight of; and every thing is thrown out of keeping, by a flat white expanse, terminating in a cornice, as near the style of the epoch as so stubborn an opponent as the flat white ceiling will allow. The expense of vaulting would not be so much greater; and, by sending some decorative painters to study the ceilings of the palaces of Rome, or those of Genoa and Venice, (where there are a few splendid specimens of arabesque decoration in the older palazzi), this enrichment to the internal decoration of our domestic architecture might be studied, and the taste, once fairly started, our own invention and design might soon surpass our models; though this is saying much, when we reflect that a Raphael, a Zuccherro, and a Michael Angelo, have been employed upon them. The want of this desideratum is sadly apparent in the apartments of the new

palace at Pimlico, where the ceilings are, for the most part, flat, the only ornament being a little "picking out" with gold; and this flatness prevents the rooms having that air of nobleness and grandeur which is apparent in most of the Italian palaces, even of private individuals.

A few good and accurate copies of arabesque, and otherwise highly enriched ceilings, would probably introduce a new branch of industry, in which many, unable to excel in the higher branches of art, might obtain a highly creditable and lucrative employment.

A period is fast approaching when neither printed papers for the walls, nor conventional composition-ornaments for cornices and ceilings, will satisfy that craving for elegance and art which is beginning to distinguish a highly educated age, even among the middle ranks. A keener perception of the beautiful is abroad; and the superior skill displayed in the design and execution of the most ordinary articles of domestic use has contributed to form that refined taste, which, in an age teeming with talent, requires originality and excellence in design, as well as mere richness in execution; for that is but a false, vulgar, and paltry substitute for true splendour. I prognosticate that, ere long, elegant arabesques of quaint and fanciful invention, the work of *artists*, will entirely supersede the unmeaning scrolls and flourishes of flock papers and composition ornaments, which may be now purchased by wholesale, and with which a whole row of genteel houses may be finished off to *match*!

The art of interior decoration was doubtless much better understood in Italy, in the middle ages, than it is now in any part of Europe; and it was most probably derived from the remains of the ancients. Raphael spent many solitary days in the buried halls of the Cæsars, on the Palatine hill; and in those subteranean chambers, no doubt imbibed much of that delicate taste so beautifully exemplified in his loggia;—a supposition rendered more probable by the discovery of Pompeii, which reveals again that style of Roman art, and in many of the superior houses of which, the decorations might almost be taken for the elegant tracings of Raphael himself; whilst those gorgeous remains of the palace of the Cæsars, now destroyed, most likely presented a richness of decoration still nearer to that displayed in the great age of modern Italian art, when the science of interior decoration was so successfully practised.

But I must particularize a few of the residences of the Roman nobles; for the private palaces of Rome, and those of Italy generally, are among the most interesting monuments of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Their construction and decoration are full of the most original and stirring genius of design, and of

the freshness and novelty that accompanied the second youth of learning and art. Those of Florence are perhaps the finest monuments of the social state of that age; and with their prevailing emblem, the golden fleece, indicating the pure origin of the wealth of the great merchant princes who erected them, the Strozzi, the Medici, &c. &c., are perhaps even more interesting than those of Rome; yet the latter have points of interest peculiarly their own. It is true that the ostentatious, and at that period, unmeaning S.P.Q.R., does not excite the same feeling as the honest emblem of the Florentines; but then the Roman palaces of the period of Bramante were no longer semi-fortresses, like those of Florence; the protecting shadow of the all-powerful Church rendered such a display of capacity for resistance unnecessary. Its suppression of the long distracting feuds of the nobles had driven their ambition into new channels; and the splendour of their palaces and villas became objects of competition, instead of the number and fierceness of their armed retainers and followers. Thus the Roman palaces of the period of Bramante mark an era in the progress of civilization, and are among the earliest models of noble houses which were not at the same time castles*.

Few strangers in Rome would pass twice through the Corso without noticing the magnificent Palazzo Doria; which, vast as it is, does not half complete the original design of its architect. But the main features of its design, though of a nature to command attention from their excessive richness, are yet so extravagant and overwrought that the work does not bear criticism. Forsyth, however, seizes upon the only *good* point to vent his classic rage upon; and speaking of the vile taste of the owners of such palaces in obtruding their armorial bearings, even in the capitals of columns, instances the eagles at the Palazzo Giustiniani, and the flower de luce at the Palazzo Doria. Now tried at a severer and juster tribunal than that of ancient art—that of fitness and decorative sufficiency—these appear proper and appropriate ornaments. In a style similar to that of the Roman Palaces, the interpolation of a complete member of another mode of architecture, a column with its own peculiar base and capital, with which no other features of the building accord, appears indeed bad taste; but of a species which was, and is, unfortunately too prevalent; whilst the introduction of ornaments, illustrative of the purpose of the building, or the rank of the proprietor, appear to be perfectly consistent and in good taste. The Doria Palace contains a fine collection of pictures; among them, some of

* They were however preceded by the fine palaces of merchants of Venice, which are the noblest models of domestic architecture in Europe.

the finest Claudes in existence, which to see in Italy, where the eye has become schooled to the reality of their glowing tints, is a great treat.

The vast Palazzo of the Borghesi family in the Via di Ripetta, is also an object of attention to tourists, but not so much from its exterior architecture, which, though simple and unpretending, is not without a certain portion of that magnificence which extent alone can realize, as for its extensive collection of pictures. But the masterpieces of that famous gallery have been so often criticised that I will not venture a remark in addition to the crowd of recorded fancies.

The Palace of the Cenci, with its half-ruined façade and degraded loggia, has received an interest from the tragic fate of its last possessors of the name, which makes it an object of interest to wanderers in Rome. But it presents little to favour the associations one would wish to arise upon the original scene of that fearful drama.

The Palazzo Sciarra Colonna has a magnificent gallery of pictures, among which are the famous, *Vanity and Modesty*, of Leonardo da Vinci.

At the Corsini Palace, where Christina of Sweden breathed her last, in 1689, I was shown the balcony where the unfortunate Duphot fell a victim to the fanaticism of the Roman populace. Joseph Bonaparte was ambassador from the Republic to Rome, and resided at the Palazzo Corsini. Some indiscreet young men on leaving the palace after a dinner given upon some public occasion, imprudently cried *Vive la République!* they were immediately attacked by the excitable and fanatic trasteverini: some friends attempted their rescue, but a body of Papal troops joined the populace, and the greatest confusion ensued; in the midst of which General Duphot was dispatched from the interior of the Palace to ascertain the cause of the tumult; he appeared upon one of the balconies, and attempted to address the mob, but was shot whilst in the act of speaking. Joseph Bonaparte himself escaped with difficulty.

At the Palazzo Spada is the celebrated statue of Pompey, and at the Palazzo Ruspigliosi the Guido ceiling.

The Palazzo Venezia is the only Roman Palace that presents any gothic features. Built by the architect Guiliano da Maiano, in 1468, it presents a curious example of architectural transition. The Gothic castellated manner forms the basis of the design, while the details are accurate and beautiful copies of Roman ornament. This was the first step towards the *cinque cento*, or transition style. It is to be regretted that so few specimens remain of this interesting period, but modern Rome is perhaps the most modern city of Europe. The

Rome of the middle ages was built or rather suspended among the stupendous ruins of antiquity, and formed a most incongruous and confused mass of irregular building. Sixtus V. in the beginning of the seventeenth century sought to place it upon a par with other modern cities, and in the modernizing rage produced by his endeavours to reduce the confused mass to the regular forms of streets, squares, &c. &c., most of the older palaces were swept away. So sudden was the change operated at this period, that Cardinal Bentivoglio, after a few years' absence, scarcely recognised his native city. "Non riconnobbe quasi piu Roma, si mutata la citta d'edifizie e di strade."

The Farnesi Palace, the finest architectural work of Michael Angelo, is particularly interesting, as being the monument which has of late years most influenced our own national taste. It has been the principal model of our architects in their attempts to ennoble the previously wretched style of our domestic architecture. Its study has given rise to those fine square masses, the club-houses of Pall Mall; the erection of which forms a remarkable era in English architecture, and doubtless points the way towards an excellence in the art at present undreamed of. The Reform Club is simply a free copy of the Palazzo Farnesi.

The Villas of the Romans also merit the name of Palaces, and form one of the great and most characteristic features of Italian scenery. But I ought rather perhaps to use the term *casino*, for our's is an imperfect acceptance of the term *villa*. In Italy a villa is not a house, but a garden; and it has been disputed among the *della crusicans*, what the difference is, between a *villa* and *vigna**. The house built in the suburban garden was originally a slight and small residence for the summer months, and called a casino; but the luxury of the papal families created, instead of a summer-house, such vast and splendid palaces as would be illdescribed by the term *casino*. However, the term *villa* is rendered more convenient by custom, and it is now generally understood in Italy that the term includes the house and grounds. Yet, there are villas without houses at all.

The Villa Borghesi, the confiscated domain of the Cenci, is open to the public, and being close to the Porta del Popolo, is the most frequented promenade, and forms in short the Hyde Park of the Romans. But neither Hyde Park, nor Kensington Gardens, nor the Thuilleries, nor Versailles, can convey an idea of the peculiar charms of a Roman villa. There is a freshness of vegetation about the suburban *delizié* of Rome, that the neighbourhood of a large town always tarnishes, except in Italy. Here, close under the walls of Rome, the Appenine

* A *vigna*, literally a vineyard, means, in general acceptance, a small farm.

anemone, with all its beautiful variations of colour, from the deepest lilac to the palest azure; and the scarlet cyclamen, and many species of the scilla genus, with their brilliant tints, spring up with the same profusion and fragrance as in the woody dells of the secluded country.

The "sky-cleaving cypress" shoots its pointed or forked-peak aloft to a height equal to that of the poplar or pine of the north; and then there are those noble groves of *Ilices* meeting in matted foliage above, that form

"A pillared shade,
With echoing walks beneath."

Then the peculiar tufted heads of the Stone Pines, grouping in picturesque masses with the terraces, statues, and fountains, all tend to give to Roman villas a romance and a charm peculiarly their own. The residence in the Villa Borghesi contains many apartments filled with beautiful works of art, both ancient and modern; but its greatest treasures still adorn the saloons of the Louvre, for which the family receive compensation from the French government. The Villa was built by Scipio Borghese, nephew of Paul V.

The Villa Panfili Doria is, perhaps, next in attraction—perhaps superior; but its greater distance from Rome, and the unhealthiness of the situation, causes it to be much less frequented. The palace itself is, on its exterior, almost entirely encrusted with antique relievos, which give an air of great and elaborate magnificence; but one cannot help regretting that those precious works of art should be exposed to the injuries of the weather in such a situation. This splendid delzia was created by the nephew of Innocent X. (a Pamphili), whose extraordinary passion for Donna Olimpia Maldachini forms the leading trait in his career. It is difficult to account for her influence, if personal charms be considered the agent; for her portrait, one of the lions of the small collection of pictures, represents a woman decidedly not beautiful, and most decidedly, a shrew.

The Villa Albani, perhaps, realizes more than any other the dreams of an Italian villa, which haunt the fancy before having seen Italy. It is chaste and classic, yet withal magnificent—a rare combination. Its collections of art are even now unrivalled. Its walls are covered with sculpture and painting, and its ceilings with glowing colours and gold; whilst its range of views from the marble terraces embrace the finest portions of the campagna, with its aqueducts and ruins.

But the finest specimens of the Italian villa, taking situation into consideration, present themselves among the beautiful rocks and slopes of Tivoli and Frascati; forming, with their noble and regular terraces, rising tier above tier, the finest possible combinations of outline, with the rugged yet lovely scenery with which they are surrounded.

From the days of Horace to the present time, those lovely hills have been the favourite retreat of the Romans; and the same style of decorative garden still surrounds the palaces with which they are so thickly studded. The descriptions which Pliny gives of his garden might serve for that of a Roman noble of the present day; and, as civilization in the sixteenth century spread northward from Italy, the straight terraces, statues, and fountains, became the models of gardens all over continental Europe; and those of Boboli and D'Este were those from which Le Brun and others produced the wonders of Versailles.

The Villa D'Este, beneath Tivoli, though its fountains are dry, and its terraces crumbling to ruin, is yet perhaps the most wonderful of these stupendous villas. In this maze of marble and matted foliage, did Tasso muse away the evenings of an Italian summer, painting in magic poetry from the magic picture around him, the fairy palace of Armida. And Tasso, who rambled among these scenes in all the freshness of their beauty, ere time had touched with his defacing finger the spotless marbles, or dried the sources of the countless fountains, or thinned the foliage of their flowery groves, might have sought in vain a fitter model; for even now the whole scene seems rather that of an enchanted castle, than simply the ruined villa of an Italian noble.

The palaces and villas of Rome form a distinctive feature in her aspect. But one which leaves an impression equally strong is formed by her numerous and splendid fountains. The principal cities of Belgium, France, and Germany, are amply decorated with public fountains. But the profuse scattering of water from the fountains of Rome is unrivalled. A copious supply of the pure element has ever been held a great and indispensable luxury by the Romans, as the ruins of her gigantic aqueducts sufficiently testify. Two of these wonderful works of her ancient citizens still convey clear and abundant streams of water into the heart of the city, after having born it upwards of twenty miles upon their vast arches across the campagna. The great fountain of Paul V., upon the Janiculan hill, pours forth the water of the aqueduct he restored, into three massive tazze, from which it falls into conduits, which supply numberless other fountains in other parts of Rome. This fountain, though possessing many defects of design, is still a most noble monument of the successful combination of architecture,

statuary, and falling water; and is not disfigured by Neptunes, sea-horses, and tritons spouting in all directions; a defect which much reduces the effect of the great fountain of Trevi. But then in that case the expanse of water in front restores the repose; and the grouping of the artificial rocks and caves upon which the figures rest, or from which they start, is so noble, and the dimensions of the whole so magnificent, that all minor defects are forgotten.

The great fountains in front of St. Peter's, throwing up their eternal cloud of foam and spray, are perhaps the finest in Rome, for they are free from any adventitious ornaments. The white column of water shooting up with immense force to a considerable height, till it breaks and scatters in a cloud of spray, falls back in powdery rain into a vast tazza, from which it descends in broken and varying sheets, glittering like silver to the reservoir beneath; and this simple design produces more poetic effect than all the lavish decorations of more costly works.

A somewhat similar effect is produced in the beautiful fountain on the Piazza Barberini, but there, unfortunately for my theory, it is a triton that spouts up the towering stream, from a shell.

The fountain on the Piazza Navonna is said to be the masterpiece of its author, Bernini, but though full of fancy and allegory, it fails to produce a poetical impression, though the grouping is decidedly fine.

I quit the subject reluctantly, for I could wish to describe more minutely many of the Roman fountains, in hopes of tempting some millionaire to make the *premier pas* in giving to our own metropolis the advantage of public decorations of this description. But when we see the only available supplies of water in the possession of grasping companies, and see a noble design for a national monument * abandoned on account of the *expense* requisite to supply the fountain, (which formed part of the design) I fear there is but little hope.

* The Nelson Testimonial.—If any of the water companies had come forward to volunteer a supply of water, there is little doubt but the beautiful design of Baily would have been adopted, instead of the unmeaning column which was decided upon.

CHAPTER X.

THE CARNIVAL AT ROME.

THIS 21st of February was the first active day of the Roman Carnival; for though it commences on twelfth-day, the last week alone is exclusively devoted to festivity. Carnival, being interpreted, as every one knows, means farewell to flesh. It is a last week of feasting previous to the fastings; so all good, catholic, apostolic Romans, endeavour to show that they intend doing hard duty in Lent by taking their *revanche* in Carnival; and make a point of eating, drinking, and having as much pleasure, as for love or money can be purchased during the week's saturnalia. The veriest miser becomes extravagant; and amusements of every description are sought and indulged with a zest and avidity truly Italian. It is moreover equally incumbent on those who have no natural gaiety in their dispositions to be merry as the rest; and this is a law to which the most serious bow without murmuring. The "fiat has gone forth;" *il faut*, as the French express it, *il faut s'amuser*. You consequently may see some most stately Harlequins, most serious Pierrots, and most silent Pulicinellos; yet even these go through the eight days' masking and mumming, with a sort of satisfaction pleasing to themselves, and would not have felt a clear conscience had they not toiled (for to such it must be toil) the requisite number of turns up and down the Corso, or missed a single *festa di Ballo* at the *teatro Alibert*.

About two o'clock I went forth from my rooms in the via Babuino, (Baboon Street) which takes its name from the ancient statue of a sylvan god over a fountain; who, in his sadly mutilated state, his nose, &c. knocked off, and his goat's legs, being the most perfect part of his remains, does not badly represent *il babuino*, which the fountain is now called, which being supplied by the virgin water, (the aqua di *Trevi*) is frequented by the inhabitants of all the neighbourhood. This street, as well as many others, was formerly known by different names by inhabitants of different parts of the city, and Pius VII. was I believe the first to cause permanent names to be written at the corners; which was a task of some difficulty,

as many from their origin were of too indelicate a nature to bear the ordeal; others, connected with historical events or party warfare, were likewise suppressed; and to give new ones without creating confusion was no easy matter.

To return from my digression: I proceeded to the Corso, and found all beginning to assume an air of bustle, although the sport had not commenced. Women were busily employed in putting the finishing hand to the decorations of the balconies; consisting sometimes of crimson damasked silk, festooned around in rich draperies*: there were others of more gaudy colours; some trimmed with gold or silver lace; some gaily embroidered with light and appropriate devices; and some were embowered with branches of laurel, bay, or other evergreens, and decorated with wreaths and garlands of early Spring flowers, of which the fertile though fatal *campagna* is so prolific. At most of the principal palazzi the balconies were hung with fine old tapestries, or richly damasked or embossed hangings, which had served the same purpose for ages. I particularly noticed those most splendid ones of the families Doria and Chigi.

As the line of carriages that promenaded up and down the Corso began to lengthen, the maskers and pedestrians of every description increased in proportion; and all rapidly became a scene of noise and confusion; in which the few sentries placed at intervals to maintain an appearance of order soon found it useless to interfere. But I am informed that a number of police in disguise were mingled with the crowd, ready to notice and suppress any disorder immediately. This appeared a wise precaution, but it was rendered unnecessary by the good behaviour of the people; no attempt at violence, robbery, or even petty larceny, occurring during the whole eight days of revel and confusion. A double line of carriages of all nations, the majority however being those of the principal families of Rome (who must be seen *en voiture* now, if at no other time) soon filled the Corso from one end to the other, a length of about a mile, and continued slowly parading up one line and down the other, till the cannon fired, for clearing the street preparatory to the horse race.

Many, Madame de Staël among others, in descriptions of the Roman Carnival have expressed their wonder as to what enjoyment the Romans can possibly derive from parading up and down the Corso. But we do not find the worthy Baroness puzzling herself about the degree of pleasure the French receive, from

* I may here mention what appears a fair derivation of our term *festoon*. The Italians distinguish their lesser and greater fetes as *festa* and *festone*. In the greater fêtes or *festone*, it has ever been customary in Italy to suspend strings of flowers against the houses, which were looped up at regular distances, forming a succession of pendant loops. This was called a decoration *a festone*; that is, after the manner of a great *fête*, from which we doubtless derive our term *festoon*.

the promenade in the Allé de Neulli, which is much the same thing; or the English tourist recollecting himself, when he abuses the Roman lounge, that similar malpractices take place every season in Hyde Park. Doubtless the pleasures of seeing, and being seen, especially in a handsome equipage, are much the same all over the world; modified only by different shades of civilization. But the mere pleasure of being seen is here not the *sole* object. I was astonished, in the commencement of the affair, to observe, that most of the men wore what would, in London slang, have been termed a few years ago "shocking bad hats," a circumstance which, noticing the equipages and appendages to be in holiday trim, I could not account for. As the affair thickened, however, I was enlightened; the first symptom of anything likely to render such a precaution necessary was made known to me by the sudden discharge, from an over-impending balcony, of about half a pound of sugar-plums, full in my face, which did not fail to leave ample traces of their visit; insomuch that I regretted I was not similarly prepared for the encounter; for I found this first attack a mere trifle, and soon discovered that this *sweet* warfare was the order of the day. I perceived that every carriage was provided with a huge basket of these projectiles; and defensive as well as offensive weapons were in use. As the storm thickened, each fair hand brandished a *par-a-bonbons*, (all nations fly to the French for these *termes de guerre*), which is something like a fencing mask with a short handle. With this shield in one hand, the Amazonian combatants protect their pretty faces from the shower of *confetti*, whilst with the other they return the compliment with energy, if not always with interest; for the balconies possess advantages which give them in most cases the best of the *azzuffo*. Some of the celebrated beauties carry a small and prettily ornamented basket, for the reception of the bouquets which are showered upon them by their admirers; who often, returning good for evil, throw a bunch of tender violets to resent a broadside of hard sugar-plums. This however did not always soften the aggressors; and I observed more than one pretty mouth put out of shape, on the contemplation of silk and velvet dresses, disfigured with the white powder of this miniature grape shot. Ladies already of a certain age were casting glances of any thing but complacency, towards ringlets so recently of a jetty hue, now presenting, from the effects of a recent volley of white sugar plums, that peculiar grizzle to which ladies after forty have such an invincible dislike. Their daughters bore this new introduction of powder with much more stoicism. I cannot but wonder that in these levelling times powder is not again introduced as a head ornament; for it certainly places heads upon a basis very nearly approaching to equality; besides which, it

is decidedly not unbecoming. Behold Lord B——; even *his* head, in the powdered wig, assumes an air of dignity;—and what would half the heads be that look so wise and important in white wigs, if deprived of their empowdered cases. Again, by the aid of friendly powder, the precise time of transition from the summer hues of brown or auburn, or the deeper jet, to the withering tinges of autumn, would be concealed; and even a head decorated with the condemned tint of the carrot, would answer the purpose of the powder-puff, as well as one of raven black. This was exemplified in the Corso, for the *confetti* prepared for the occasion, of which thousands of pounds weight were exposed for sale in all the adjacent streets, would have been found, upon analysis, to contain about ninety-nine parts of chalk or flour, to one of sugar; so that the powdering was soon most complete; and after the respective toilets were once fairly equalized, the few long faces gradually widened, and all was animation and gaiety,—“*ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.*” The sharpest engagements took place under a balcony occupied by Prince C——, with some English companions, and a party of French; they had an immense supply of *confetti*, and each time a carriage of friends passed beneath (this strife only takes place amongst *connoissances*) they were greeted with a few pounds of sugar plumbs, emptied from a large soup-plate, or projected from a tin engine somewhat resembling a huge extinguisher; whilst the sharpest discharge was from a kind of sling, formed of a piece of whalebone about eighteen inches in length, to the end of which is affixed a sort of spoon, or rather ladle, which being drawn back until the handle is nearly double, and suddenly let go, discharges the missiles with almost the force and precision of Perkins's gun. One luckless carriage was stopped by a halt in the line, just under this tremendous battery, and the facility and effect with which the first discharge was administered, only gave *gusto* to the continuation of the attack, which soon half filled the carriage. Retaliation was vain, for the nearest carriages and even pedestrians, seeing such a decisive attack upon the devoted vehicle (actuated by the same principle upon which a lame dog is worried by all the species), joined in the attack, and all parties were nearly lost in the cloud of smoke-like dust. Such a scene can scarcely be described; the men of the party attempted to return the salute—while those of the gentler sex, giving up all hopes of victory, crouched beneath their parasols from the pitiless hail storm; and the coachman, dressed as a woman, displayed to the utmost advantage a most magnificent pair of legs in his endeavours to raise the head of the carriage. “The mirth and fun grew fast and furious”—when the line again moving forward, extricated the sufferers from their perilous situation; and all was for a moment

comparatively calm. The traces of the combat were however still visible: a dense white cloud might be observed slowly rising towards the third story of the Palazzo G—, and a desperate gang of little urchins were scrambling among the horses' feet, collecting the *confetti*, which were now ankle-deep, to sell again at half-price, to the less aristocratic combatants who fought on foot, who not having the means, like the balconists and carriagists, of carrying large quantities of ammunition, were compelled ever and anon to renew their stock of projectiles from the nearest source. Bang! bang! the signal cannon!—This is to clear the street for the horse race. Every carriage is now obliged to take the first turning out of the Corso, to the right or left; by which arrangement the whole length of the street is cleared in an incredibly short time, without confusion. And all being clear, the maskers and mummers take full possession, and in the interval previous to the race, all bow to the now imperial sway of the sceptre of Momus.

“Love making, laughing, morris dancing, mumming,
“Guitars, and every other sort of strumming,”

are now the order of the day.

Here is a doctor with ruffles to the tips of his fingers, spectacles on nose as large as saucers, a huge wig, which, at every Burleigh-like shake, conceals both physician and patient in a cloud of powder, or science;—and the *malade* is as effectually mystified as by the one of the true family of Esculapius; but with the advantage of paying no heavier fee than a bouquet, or perhaps a box on the ear, if the patient be a lady, and the surmises or remedies of the doctor not approved of. A cure for love! a cure for love! he cries, *accorrete donne! accorrete donne!* and the specifics in Molière's “*Malade Imaginaire*.”—“*Saignare Purgare et Glisterrare*,” are prescribed with a volubility, emphasis, and rapidity, that none but Italians are capable of; the clatter of words is stunning. This too on all sides—*Via! via! per la contessa*, is shouted from an advancing party; doctor and patient are now nearly swept away by a file of sturdy lackeys, their coats profusely garnished with the leaves of curly endive instead of lace, one stocking black and one white, with an immense cocked hat, surmounted by a plume of the foliage of the turnip. “Make way for the countess,” they shout, one after another—*Via per la contessa!* The countess follows, seven high feet high—a pimple on her nose as large as a mushroom, and holding her pink satin draperies high enough to display in their full proportions a pair of legs fit for the Farnesian Hercules, exclaiming all the time, with a simper, against the inconveniences heaped upon one of the fair sex

indeed (above other nations), a *very* great intriguing nation; but as a little intrigue at such an assembly demands less physical exertion than dancing gallopades, the lazy Romans prefer it; and from practice, manage all the little mystifications and equivoques, to which masking affords such facility, with a delicacy and dexterity not understood even by the lively French.

A stranger in Rome, without a very large circle of introductions among the higher class, would imagine that there was not much beauty in the papal city, unless he were there during the carnival, when alone the women show themselves. He does not see them about the streets, as in the towns of France and England: the Romans are not a promenading people; and a French traveller exclaims, "*il n'y a point de jolies femmes!*" But this very habit of avoiding continual exposure to the air, whether too hot or too cold, at stated hours on a public promenade, is one of the reasons for the great beauty of so many of the Roman women. The bloom of youth is not tarnished or diminished by exposure, and consequently as long as their rich southern style of beauty lasts, which in countries near the sun is a shorter period than in the cool far north, it possesses a dewy freshness of bloom, which frequent exposure to all atmospheres, on public promenades, so soon injures among nations addicted to that pastime. Let those sceptical of Roman beauty, who have not the time, or perhaps not the opportunity to cultivate a connexion in the agreeable native society of Rome, go to the *festa di ballo* any night during the carnival, and he will behold forms as lovely as the most luxuriant fancy can picture; and eyes, glancing beneath the black silk mask (which only covers the upper half of the face), as brilliant and as speaking as his dreams of eastern houris have ever shadowed to his imagination in the poet's fiction. I have seen fine eyes, beautiful eyes, expressive eyes, in England, in France; but the flash, the passion, the soul, the love of an Italian eye, I have seen but in Italy; and the finest women of Italy I have seen in Rome. At Naples they are as a race very plain. At Venice, the lower orders only can be considered pretty. In Piedmont, it is true, there is a great deal of beauty among all classes; but it is not that peculiar style of luxuriant beauty which is supreme in Rome. Who could see and forget the Desdemona at that masked ball; or the two sisters C——i, in their Frascati costumes? but most likely all were too busy with their own peculiar affair to pay much attention to the company generally; for on the night I particularly allude to, the next day being Friday, all was closed at midnight; which sudden termination of the revels must, despite the greatest industry of countless parties concerned, have left many assignations unarranged, and prevented the clearing up of many mystifications, which are perhaps not solved to the present hour.

The carnival proceeded day after day (excepting the Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday), with its reign of revelry, until Tuesday, the third of March, which being the last day was unusually full, and the warfare of the *confetti* more brisk than ever. The principal novelty in the procession was the car of the *pensionnaires* of the French Academy. They represented the Deities of Olympus, and looked the parts extremely well. The car was enveloped in clouds, which concealed the wheels, and had a very good effect, considering they were but pasteboard etherialized by black and white chalk. This cloudy vehicle was drawn by a pair of winged horses; where they succeeded in matching old Pegasus, I am not aware; but the *job* would have sorely puzzled an Elmore or a Dyson, although they both are acknowledged to know as much about *hosses* as any two gentlemen I can call to mind.

But notwithstanding all these efforts, the spirit of the carnival is no longer what it was; to sustain a character is now considered a dereliction of caste, and such things, when abandoned to the lower orders, soon lose their point and finish. The only good things in this way are done by foreigners, who seem to enter into the fun with more zest than the Romans; indeed, the English made more noise, and threw more *confetti*, than all the other mummers combined: yet there is little meaning in the best attempts that are now made at sustaining character, or producing a picture. Nothing like the carnival of the middle ages, when the strangest ideas were most elaborately embodied for the sports of the carnival—three or four hundred persons combining to represent scenes and stories, often with great splendour. Vasari relates that Pietro de Corsini, a Florentine painter of the fifteenth century, distinguished himself in such displays; and upon one occasion produced the triumph of death. It was done by torch light. Death, a skeleton upon a sable car drawn by buffalos, was surrounded and followed by other cars representing yawning graves; which, at every halt, while solemn music played, gave forth their dead; who rose partially from the dark openings, singing a solemn dirge. The people were at first amazed and frightened at the ghastly pageant; but the pictorial effect was soon appreciated, and Pietro was saluted with loud Vivas, for his startling device.

But though nothing of this sort remains at the Italian carnivals, that of Rome still presents many peculiarities which are highly interesting and striking, when seen for the first time. It still displays traits of national character not to be witnessed except under its influence, and I was as much excited by the scene as though I had been told that I still saw the carnival of Rome in all its original splendour. I hasten to conclude my brief descriptive sketch.

Many cars of maskers, in white linen jackets, now began to appear; looking

like the procession to a cricket-club; among whom, I recognised several of the leaders of Roman ton. This I found was a preparation for the conflict of the *moccoli* or *muccoli*, (little candles); and that, after the horse race, which was part of each day's amusement, was concluded, it was a point of honour not to be without one of these same *muccoli*; which, as soon as daylight wanes, begin to glitter and twinkle in every hand in the corso. It is what an Irishman might call *waking* the carnival; which had now breathed its last. Every little urchin who can raise a farthing taper, runs about shrieking "*e morto il carnevale!*—*e morto il carnevale!*" and groaning in the ear of every one without a light, *senza mocolo-o-o-o!*—*come si fa senza mocolo!* It may be imagined I was soon obliged to provide myself with a *muccolo*. As the dusk of evening deepened, the effect of this moving illumination was most beautiful; from every balcony, from the tops of the houses, or slung across the streets, glittered the brightly twinkling *muccoli*, shooting every moment into light, in new and unexpected salutations; like mimic meteors. *C'est une pluie de feu*, exclaimed a Frenchman; and as the carriages moved along, each filled with the little lights, the corso seemed indeed filled with a shower of fire. I have never seen a *studied* illumination equal to this *impromptu*; it exceeds in brilliancy and fairy-like playfulness of effect any thing that can be imagined. Could it be imitated on the stage, as a closing scene to some grand spectacle, it would make the fortune of a London theatre. But the spirit of the device was yet to come; I found that although I had provided myself with a *muccolo*, it was not so easy to keep it;—handkerchiefs fixed to the tops of canes, and extinguishers attached to the end of poles, were flourishing about in every direction. Attacking each other's light was the order of the revel, and *smorzare il muccolo* the cry, as a dozen handkerchiefs waved menacing round your light; which required no slight skill and activity exerted in its favour to preserve its precarious existence for a moment. Ladies stood upon the seats of the carriages, holding on high, as far as their delicate arms could stretch, the threatened *muccolo*. "*Ammazzare la signora principessa*," is the cry of a group of assailants (meaning of course only the light), *ammazzare la contessina!* The fair are defended by their companions, who strike at the lights of the besiegers, and "*smorzare il Signor Conte*" is the shout from the beleaguered carriage. They succeed; the Count's light is extinguished; and as the carriage moves on at the moment, *la bella principessa* remains victorious;—but no—a treacherous enemy, between the cocked hats of the footmen, deals so true a blow with his white *fazzoletto*, that the laughing princess is left lightless. "*Senza muccolo-o-o*" is now groaned

around, till the extinguished taper is again ignited; and this is the sport that makes the whole length of the corso resound with laughter and merriment.

The combats between rival balconies were among the most interesting, particularly between the first and second stories. Some had twisted two or three dozen *muccoli* into one grand torch, which was sure to produce a vehement attack; and then the flapping of handkerchiefs, and flashing of torches, have a capital effect, and remind one of the torments which Juan is subjected to in the infernal regions, until it is discovered that the new visitant is as good a devil as the fiends themselves. Sometimes a devoted drapeau of delicate cambric is caught, and immediately condemned (at the end of a pole projected from the balcony) to be devoured by the flames of the justly irritated *muccoli*; aiding, in its brilliant and rapid conflagration, the general effect of this scene of extempore pyrotechny. But this judgment is not carried into effect without opposition: rival poles attempt a rescue, even at the eleventh hour, just as the lace border is fluttering like a moth round the flame which is soon to consume it. It is unavailing,—the devoted kerchief floats away a sheet of fire; and in a moment a few glittering sparks announce its total annihilation and being, as a weapon either offensive or defensive in the war of the *muccoli*. The shouts of the victors and the desperate attempts at reprisal now present a scene which would in London be a riot. In Rome it is but the extravagance of a moment; and as the bells strike the first hour of the night, the last of the carnival, every light is extinguished, and all is soon as still as though the *muccoli* had never been called into their short, but glittering and busy, existence.

The moon resumes her pale dominion over the deserted windows of the corso; the remaining carriages straggle off by every outlet; and thus ends the Carnival of Rome.

I will not moralize upon its follies and extravagances; there are the six weeks' of the fastings and purifications of Lent, before all parties concerned; and with those advantages, I leave them to make their own arrangements.

in the license of the carnival ; declaring, in phrase that poor John Reeve might thus have translated, “ that in these times, no modest young creature can walk the streets *without impunity*.” In short, there were masks and fun of every light and shade, except that (unlike our masquerades) there were no parsons—no reflections on the clergy : as Byron sings, in Beppo—

“ A man had better go begirt with briars,
“ Than put on ought that may reflect on friars.”

The second signal was given ; the horses were ready to start ; and a troop of dragoons at full trot endeavoured to clear the middle of the street for the race. Their efforts were always ineffectual : no sooner were they passed than the waves of the crowd rushed again, like the waters of a river, to the bed from which they had been momentarily expelled by a passing hurricane ; this operation was repeated again and again, with precisely the same result.

At the foot of the obelisk, on the *Piazza del Popolo*, a wooden arena is constructed, not unlike the miniature model of an ancient amphitheatre, which is soon crowded with the curious to witness the start. The horses, a small breed peculiar to the Roman territory (*barberi* as they are called), are led forth, kicking and plunging with the torment of the goads, which are fixed to different parts of the body by means of pieces of gilt leather, attached to which hangs a short string, at the end of which is suspended a small iron ball covered with sharp spikes, that at every motion of the half infuriated beast, spur him in a fresh place. The manes and tails are interplaited with silken ribands of the favourite colours of the *padrone* ; and from the head, a profusion of streamers float in every direction, which, with the rattling pieces of tinsel that are fixed to the goad leathers, tend to excite and terrify the animals, and increase their speed. With his two *barbareschi*, or grooms, at his head, each steed is thus led up, snorting and maddening, to the rope, which is drawn breast high across the Piazza. The *barbareschi* are dressed in a jacket of coarse cloth ; breeches either open at the knee or fixed with a huge buckle of grotesquely chased silver ; stockings of light vivid blue, and the costume completed with the pendant scarlet cap, with a gold band, worn by the Genoese sailors. So different is the wild scene before us from any of *our* national sports, that we might almost fancy ourselves at some barbaric spectacle, in the camp of an Alaric, or an Attila. While I have been describing the costumes, the horses (every one knows they are without riders) have been stationed as fairly as their plunging, kicking, and struggling, would allow, at the rope. It falls !—the infuriated steeds rush madly forward ; the noise of the

start, the rattle of the tinsel, and the shouts of the *barbareschi*, accelerating their speed and terror to the highest pitch. For the first fifty yards their route is lined with soldiers of the papal guard, to ensure a favourable start; but after that there was no lane prepared. The crowd opened mechanically as they approached, and closed as immediately after their passage, leaving no trace of their course. Seen from above, the effect is most singular: every instant you expect to see the wild horses plunging amid the dense crowd before them; and still they seem not, with all their speed, to attain it. The small space before them and behind them appears a sort of atmosphere of their own, which, in their rapid course, they carry with them. At the *via della ripresa de barberi*, which may be translated, *horse catching street*, and which has received its name from the annual recapture of these wild horses upon the spot, a double line of soldiery again forms an avenue, at the end of which, just where the corso terminates, and the *via della ripresa* commences, a strong piece of sail-cloth is suspended across the passage, and a few yards farther, where the street is less than twenty feet across, another piece is more firmly secured; so that the horses, rushing furiously against the first obstacle, either fall and are at once re-taken, or force their way under, and are secured between the two. This part of the race I was unable to witness the first day, preferring to see the start; but on Thursday, which is the grand prize day, for which fourteen horses started, I got places immediately above, and saw the whole affair most conveniently. It is one of those sights one prefers seeing from a post of security. The winner came on at a furious pace, several lengths in front of his adversaries, who followed in so close a phalanx, that, to borrow a technicality of the turf, you might have "covered them with a blanket." It is at this point that the owners, generally among the richer peasantry of the neighbourhood, take their stand; and their shouts, or rather screams of encouragement, or triumph, are deafening. I say screams, for I noticed that in Rome, whilst the females have almost invariably their deep *voix voilée* of a Pasta, the men have generally a shrill penny-trumpet sort of voice, which, from the athletic forms of these sturdy peasants, produces occasionally a most ridiculous effect. The little chesnut barb now dashing against the sail-cloth or curtain, forced his way under it, and fell; he was then secured without further difficulty; but when the mass came up, the confusion was terrific. Every *barbaresco* rushed forward to secure his own barb, fearless of the consequences, which were soon proved to be serious; for one, receiving in the *mêlé* a violent kick upon the chest, fell, when, at the same moment, a barb that had been distanced by his fleeter adversaries

came galloping wildly and unexpectedly amongst the crowd, the soldiers having closed, imagining all the horses had arrived, and confusion was at its height. The stray barb was however quickly captured, but not until the forgotten barbaresco, who had fallen, was trampled to death, and a broken leg of another added an additional sufferer to the catastrophe. The dead man was carried somewhere out of sight, and all proceeded as usual. The Romans display great apathy with regard to life and death: the nature of their religion, ensuring pardon in return for a stipulated number of masses, gives them almost the feelings of a Mahometan upon the subject, who sees in death nothing but the passage to the garden of houri's. In illustration of this feeling, it may be stated, that when a murder is committed, the perpetrator seldom attempts escape. I have even known such a case totally unnoticed for many days; no person thinking it his business to inform the authorities; and many escape punishment altogether, until some private pique or revenge has at length betrayed them to the sluggish and insufficient police; and then the culprit resigns himself with the stoicism of a Cato.

I inquired what was the amount of the prize gained by the little chesnut barb; a soldier amused me by replying *ci sono quindici padroni, sara un mezzo grosso l'uno*. There are fifteen proprietors—there will be half a grosso (about two-pence) each for them. This was a slightly exaggerated joke of my informant, for I found the prize was an embroidered banner, with a present of forty *scudi*. The fifteen *proprietors* of the winning horse would manage very well the division of the silver, but how was the real trophy, the banner, to be apportioned? this I never knew, but it excited most probably very little difficulty, "*il n'y a plus de gloire*."

The victor was now marched off, preceded by a richly-liveried official, bearing the flag in question, and some half-score drummers and fifers, whose noisy notes of triumph appeared to terrify the poor beast more than all the rattle-traps still dangling about him. This procession, followed by a host of shouting rabble, proceeded to the great doors of the Campidoglio—the Capitol!—well may one exclaim *il n'y a pas de gloire*;—however, those who have seen the Mahometan insolently chewing his opium in the holy places of Jerusalem—the hyena grinning his horrid laugh over his putrid prey in the halls of Babylon—or the embalmed remains of the rulers of Thebes and Memphis torn from their royal tombs to entertain the noisy disputants of a medical society, or used as fuel (they burn very briskly) by the wandering Arabs—will not feel astonished at this desecration of the scene of departed greatness. Thus *la Corza*, as the Romans pronounce it, terminates.

The carriages resume their promenade, and the war of sugar-plumbs recommences and continues, though perhaps not with its pristine vigour, till the first hour of night, which, at this time of the year, corresponds to our five o'clock. There was nothing very new to me in this conflict after what I had already witnessed, excepting perhaps an attack upon two *Abbati*, who had ventured into the midst of these carnival frolics. An impudent urchin cast the first stone, and the puny shower lodged in the broad shovel hats, which created so much laughter, and so much temptation to boot, that these sable reservoirs were soon brimming with sugar-plumbs, forming, from the opening in front, and on either side, three continual cascades, or, to use the amiable Italian diminutive, *cascatelles*; which soon so completely changed the hue of the cassoc, that one night, without much risk of being indicted for perjury, have sworn for once that black was white. The sun set; the first hour of night was heard striking upon the bells of the three hundred churches of Rome, and the first day's carnival was over; for on the first night there is no *festà di ballo*—Anglice, masked ball.

Many private balls were given that evening; but since private balls, or entertainments of any other species, are become much the same all over Europe, those of Rome possess no peculiarity worthy of note. The civilization of the North and the South have rubbed elbows together in the saloons of Petersburg and Naples; that of the East and West in those of Vienna and London, each losing its local colour by the contact, and assuming the conventional hue which now distinguishes the best society in all the civilized countries of Europe, and, with slight variations of the same tint, almost all over the world.

In the more popular amusements of a country, a greater degree of national colour is preserved; and nothing like the public *feste de Ballo* of the Roman carnival exists out of Italy. A masked ball in London or Paris can give no idea of the vast assemblages at the *teatro Alibert*. This theatre being found ill adapted to dramatic representations is used exclusively for this purpose; and its vastness is well suited to such entertainments; at which, not less than four or five thousand persons are usually present at one time, and perhaps as many as twenty thousand visit the theatre in the course of the evening. There is an unceasing influx of fresh company, and the succession of new masks and costumes renders the busy scene one of untiring interest as long as it lasts. Music continues all the evening, but this perhaps is the only symptom of a ball; for there is never more than one group of waltzers or quadrilles. It is true that the arena is so filled that no great surplus of room remains clear for dancing; but this is not the main reason. The Italians are not a dancing nation; nor

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOLY WEEK.

THE great pontifical *fonzione* of the holy week, as performed by the court of Rome, form one of the grand attractions to the sight-hunting strangers, principally English, who making the tour of Italy pass the winter in Rome. Of course I determined not to see less than the rest; though all the "pomp and circumstance," the trappings and etiquette, of such scenes, are to me a species of nuisance. Yet as a tourist I had a duty to perform; and I flatter myself that I went through it patiently, and with as little murmuring as most men. These celebrated *fonzione* take place in the papal chapels of the Vatican, the *Sistina*, and *Paolina*; to which ladies are admitted only by tickets of the major-domo, which are easily procured as long as there is room, but the confined limits of the *Sistina* can afford but a small space for this purpose, which is partitioned off, and separated from the body of the chapel. Many therefore who have not applied for tickets in time are prevented from witnessing a ceremony for which purpose they have perhaps travelled some thousand miles, whilst even of those furnished with the proper passport, many are refused admittance for want of room. Such, however, are perhaps more fortunate another day; but for those unprovided with the tickets of the major-domo there is no hope. These unfortunates are stopped and turned back, by a little man in a red tunic, upon the great staircase of the Vatican, and all ingress to the scene of pomp hermetically closed to them; unless they be *principesse*, or led by an ambassador; whose interest, however, is useless, if the ladies' seats are full. A principessa indeed stands a better chance, as there is a sort of separate *loge* prepared for all ladies bearing such a title, even if merely personal, like that of the daughter of Lord S., conferred by the King of Bavaria. There is also a *loge* for the *clique diplomatique*, with its secretaries, sub-secretaries, and attachés, where the spruce young gentlemen in their court dresses cut a very pretty figure. There is yet another *private* box, labelled for princes and near relations of reigning dynasties, where might be seen every day, Don Miguel, Prince Carlos of Naples, the prince of Saxe Weimar, and many others. Such marked distinctions seem rather out of place in a church, but the fastidious separation of the male and female portions of the congregation produces a still more disagreeable impression. If you go with a party of ladies, you are separated from them by the Swiss guard or attendants, and see them marshalled into the ladies' pew, whilst you are left to shift for yourself. Men who have not the honour to be princes or ambassadors have no seats provided for them, and stand in promiscuous crowd in the centre of the chapel, so that the end of the show, as

may be imagined, comes not unwished for by the majority of spectators. All men are freely admitted to the open space, without tickets, provided they are dressed in black, and do not go in frock coats ; but the great talisman by which to pass the Swiss guard, after all is proclaimed full, is an uniform. Whether red, yellow, white, green, or blue, is immaterial—an uniform passes the guard in every direction with impunity ; a warlike costume is allowed peaceable possession of the best place it can scramble to. This being a well-known fact among tourists, you see here a stranger mixture of costumes than at a fancy ball ; old yeomanry finery is carried all the way to Rome for the holy week, and non-descript orders and crosses tacked on without taste or meaning. Many uniforms, such as were never seen in any service in Europe, are made up in Rome, and hired for the occasion to self-created captains, colonels, or field marshals, who fret their little hour upon the busy stage of Sistina, as uneasy in their unaccustomed finery, as the goat in boots, or a citizen with a sword.

From the foregoing remarks some idea may be formed of the character of the crowd collected in the Sistine chapel, to witness the ceremony of Palm Sunday, the first grand day. Parts of the ceiling and walls of this celebrated chapel have, as every one knows, been rendered precious by the pencil of Michael Angelo. The most celebrated of these works, the Last Judgment, occupies the entire wall of the upper end of the chapel in place of an altar ; but it is grown so dark with age, and is so badly lighted, that it is scarcely possible to *demeler* the subject at a glance ; indeed you cannot, without the assistance of an outline print, form a fair idea of the composition. An Italian critic, speaking of this great work, says, *fu fracasso nell'immaginazione* : it might do so if the grand and imposing confusion of the design were perceptible at once, but this is not the case, and I look upon this work as more suited to the study and dissection of the ambitious aspirant in the art, than satisfactory as a whole to the eye of the connoisseur*.

These random reflections crossed my mind as I shouldered to and fro among the crowd of many coloured coats and multiform epaulettes. At length his Holiness appeared ; their eminences of the *sacro collegio* were duly marshalled ; the bishops, in mitred dignity, took their stations, and the train of superbly dressed attendants and other functionaries arranged the order of the day. Gregorio XVI. wore a tiara of silver brocade, a robe of gold and silver tissue mingled, the *chapa* of scarlet richly embroidered, and much lace and trapping which I cannot describe, and which were all changed for other decorations with the greatest attention to etiquette and precedence, at several different stages of the performance ; all which would be as tedious to write as it was to see. First came the distribution of the palms, which, after all, were not palms, but fine flourishing

* I afterwards saw it several times under more favourable circumstances, and in some degree changed my opinion ; it is certainly a grand effort, and in a favourable light still has a miraculous effect.

affairs, something like a bulrush decorated with wood shavings, of which materials, in fact, I conjecture the palm branches to have been composed. Then came the procession to the capella Clementina; then the return, and the knocking at the door of the Sistina. There were "marchings and counter-marchings," such as Major Sturgeon himself never endured; yet all this was rendered imposing by the gorgeous splendour of the dresses. And ever and anon, as the drawling nasal sort of recitative (which was slurred over as a thing of course) was interrupted by a burst of heavenly harmony from the choir, the effect of the pageant became truly grand.

I never heard such voices (there is no organ), nor such perfection in the execution of that difficult counterpoint, which is one of the great beauties of the fine old church music of Italy; indeed, I have heard some pieces during the holy week, which were alone worth a pilgrimage to Rome. The beautiful hymn, "Gloria lauset honor," the *Kyrie* in full chorus, the *resurrexit*, and, above all, the celebrated *miserere* of Allegri, which was executed on the Wednesday afternoon, surpass all that can be conceived of solemn and impressive, yet most sweet and delicious, harmony.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, there was less pageantry, but more music. The music of the Sistine chapel is a thing perfectly unique—nothing resembling it can be heard elsewhere. The first notes of the tenebræ, from those unearthly and unseen voices, have a most magical effect. Poured forth in the midst of noise and confusion, they produce an immediate lull of intense attention—their mellifluous softness hushes every other sound, like oil poured upon troubled waters; whilst the thrilling sustention of the heavenly tones affects the imagination in a manner which surely no other music can produce.

Previous to the commencement of the celebrated *Miserere*, thirteen candles are placed upon a pyramid within the balustrade of the altar: twelve of these represent the twelve apostles. These are extinguished, one by one, till the solitary thirteenth alone remains, representing the Mother of Christ, which is intended to exhibit the desertion of the cross. As the last is extinguished, all music ceases—twilight creeps over the chapel, and its true and false votaries; and, as the shades deepen, one high thrilling note at last breaks the mournful silence, and, sustaining its clear and liquid sound, is joined by another and another, till the plaintive harmony sweeps along the roof in powerful volume, but swelling and subsiding like the sounds of an *Æolian* harp agitated by fitful gusts of wind. But I must not attempt to describe what is indescribable. The wonderful voices of the Sistine chapel produce, without any instrumental accompaniment, effects which I have never heard approached, either in thrilling beauty or impressive grandeur and yet I could not listen with undisturbed pleasure, for the supernatural sweetness of those voices continually reminded me of the degrading and unnatural

mutilation that had produced it, and caused a shudder of disgust where the beauty of the music demanded a sigh of pleasure.

On Wednesday night I retired early to bed, in order to gain strength to go through the labours of Thursday, which is the grand day in these proceedings. The ceremonies commence in the Sistine chapel, after which the Pope proceeds to the great balcony of St. Peter's, where he confers the benediction upon the assembled crowd ; he then descends to St. Peter's, to wash the feet of the apostles, and afterwards meets them in an apartment in the Vatican, where he waits upon them at supper.

To see all this appeared to me impossible, though many of my poor countrywomen went through the whole of it without flinching. Female courage, when curiosity is to be satisfied, is not easily daunted. Having already seen a good deal of Sistine ceremonies, I preferred securing a good place for a view of the feet-washing, and by resigning the previous ceremonies, succeeded in doing so. I did not regret my arrangement, for scarcely was the *missa cantata* drawing to a close in the chapel above, than the rush into St. Peter's for the *lavanda* (as the foot-washing ceremony is termed) was terrific ; the benediction not being cared for so much, on account of its repetition on the ensuing Sunday.

The representatives of the apostles were at length arranged in proper order, and the Pope having arrived from the benediction, the ceremony commenced. The lace apron was with much punctilio tied around the loins of his holiness : the cambric napkin, and the golden basin, were borne by cardinals, and the *santo padre* was led to the scene of the *lavanda*. Whether this pompous *apparato* was quite in keeping with a rite established in illustration of the humility of the founder of the gospel, I must not stay to inquire. The men procured for the show were robed in white, and wore white conical caps on their heads, appearing all very ill at ease in their conspicuous situation, as the *santo padre* advanced to operate upon them. A sort of bustle now ensued among them to get their feet, or rather their foot (for only the right foot of each was washed), disengaged from the loose sort of pantaloon with which they were covered : the Pope then poured water from a silver ewer upon the foot, which he then gently patted with the cambric napkin, and passed on to the next. A friend suggested that after we had seen three feet washed, we should have a very good idea of this part of the spectacle, and proposed making a rush, while it was yet time to get a place in the supper room. This resolution we carried into effect, with some difficulty, as many others entertained a similar opinion respecting the best plan for the day's exertions. The scene, as we passed the narrow entrance of the ladies' boxes, where a similar rush to get out was taking place, was truly terrific ; a crowd, all women, seems to be a fearful thing, and particularly when most of them are unknown to each other ; each looking upon her neighbour as some *queer* person whom it is good breeding to elbow out of the way. Shoes were

lost, veils torn, and many toilets so completely discomposed, that it was not possible to appear in front of the *loges* of the supper room until a sort of refit had taken place.

The men were at first more orderly, but once out of St. Peter's, it was a terrific race up those intermediate stairs, and along the boundless corridors of the Vatican ; but it was a race for all or nothing, as immediately that the room was tolerably full, the Swiss guards were ordered to close round the entrance, in which situation they formed an impassable barrier, with their spiked armour of the fifteenth century, and their crossed halberds of dimensions not used since the same era. This being the state of things, and there being some thousands of candidates, and only about two hundred places, it may be imagined that the contest was severe ; the best legs had the best chance ; and it is a compliment to my own to state, that I entered with the first group, though not exactly in the manner I should have chosen, had it been possible for me to see the show in any other way. Nevertheless, I had perhaps reason to congratulate myself upon the whole, for the young Prince A—B—fell up stairs, heels foremost, which lost him so much ground that he got completely mixed up with the *oi polloi*, and though a good runner had much difficulty in getting in at all.

The dinner, or supper, or whatever it was called, was set out in excellent style, and with the rich decorations of the table, which after the feast were to be scrambled for by the suppositious apostles, formed a striking contrast with its humble type and original—the last supper. With each *couvert* were placed three bottles of wine ; one of Burgundy, one of Xeres, and one of Lachrima Christi. I do not mean to insinuate that the apostles were three-bottle men, but they were exceedingly well provided for ; indeed, I have seldom seen a better furnished board ; but an old Roman marquis assured me it was nothing. He (like all old people) had seen things much better done in *his* time ; particularly, as he told me, when all the cardinals dined* ; *that*, he assured me, was *de facto una bellezza*, and that nothing this year was like what it used to be in the good old time ; in short, he begged me not for a moment to imagine I had seen “a holy week.”

At length the thirteen apostles were seated : St. Paul is the thirteenth, but by what right they place him at the table of the last supper, I cannot conceive, for although a gentleman of good repute, he was at that time still a persecutor. I wonder, in their catholic veneration for Saints, that a seat was not provided for St. Antonio, St. Francesco, and that truly gentlemanly man, the venerable Bede. But this may seem jesting, than which upon such a subject nothing is farther from my intention ; it is but a smile, so often not to be suppressed at the perhaps well-intentioned, but obsolete and ridiculous mummeries of the Romish church.

* This feast of cardinals was suppressed a few years ago, by Leo XII.

Previously to the apostles taking their seats, the Pope, after a short discourse by the chaplain, bestows his benediction upon the viands, upon which Monsignore the chamberlain ties on the apron of his holiness, who then presents water to his guests to wash their hands ; Monsignore supporting the gold basin. The pope next offers drink to each once or twice ; then a few dishes, which are presented to him by kneeling prelates ; and then retires. Prelates and others continue to wait upon the apostles during the repast, who, after they have finished, carry off the remains of the good fare ; not forgetting the napkins, forks, spoons, et cetera. I should have stated that during the presence of his holiness, his private chaplain delivers a discourse, which is however completely drowned in the din of the crowd, and the clatter of knives and forks ; and after his departure, the strain is continued by another functionary to the end. Thus, with the scramble for the fragments of the feast, terminated the principal part of the great doings of holy Thursday, the most busy day of the week.

Having attended service at the room fitted up as an English church out of the Porta del Popolo, &c. and thus omitted the ceremonies of Friday, the washing of the altar, the adoration of the cross, &c. &c., I inquired what were the best *fonzione* for Saturday. These appeared to be the baptism of converts, and ordination of priests, at St. Giovanni Lateranno. This, therefore, was *mon affaire* ; for I determined to see all I could, upon the precept of a French acquaintance, that when one is at Rome *il faut tout avaler*. This baptism is that of a few Jews, said to be newly converted to the faith, whose sponsors are usually persons of distinction, or foreigners, if Roman Catholics, who happen to be in Rome at the time. A Turk or a Hindoo is treated with still greater ceremony ; but this year converts of any kind were scarce ; Jews not to be had at any price ; and the ceremony had a good chance of being omitted altogether, when two recreant Hebrews from the filthiest depths of the *ghetto* were at length procured, and the show was unexpectedly increased by three little Moorish girls, brought from Africa by Marshal Bourmont. The ceremony takes place in the celebrated baptistry of Constantine, called St. Giovanni del Fonte, which is in fact a small but superb church, upon the spot where the imperial convert received baptism from St. Silvestro. This small arena was filled at an early hour, and I was among the fortunate few who procured a place. An attendant of Don Miguel stood sponsor for one of the Jews, and Marshal Bourmont became godfather to one of his blacks ; but who the others were patronized by I could not distinguish, in the general scuffle that was going on around me. These new christians were dressed in a robe of white ; a satin ribbon, also of white, was bound round the head, with the exception of one of the little Moors, who wore her native turban, and was really a pretty little black.

After the ceremony they were removed to the great church of S. Giovanni Laterano, where they were placed in the choir during the high mass and the

ordination of priests, and formed the great point of attraction ; all being anxious to get a peep at the interesting neophytes. The Italians spoke expressively of the two Jews as *christianacci* (or great ugly christians) while they all agreed, with one of their endearing diminutives, that the little negress was a *christianuccia*, (a pretty little christian.) How rich is this language in its expressive terminatives !

The priests to be ordained were chiefly monks of the different orders : some had their heads closely shaven, with the exception of a ring of jet black hair running round the back just above the ears, and meeting in front ; some had merely a small tonsure, whilst others, with their wiry beards, were easily distinguishable as Cappucini. In all they numbered about thirty, and the different forms to be gone through with each lasted a most tedious time. The oaths were at length administered by the bishop, after which I took my departure, taking coach for St. Peter's, where I arrived just in time to witness the grains of incense applied to the pascal taper, (*arbor pascalis*) when with one of the lights, from the triangle, at the chaunted words, "*ignis accendit*," they light it ; after which ensues the benediction of the taper, and other ceremonies, which to be interesting must be understood ; and I refer the curious to the work of M. Cancellieri, reprinted in 1814.

It is impossible, however, for a stranger to understand much of the spirit of these *fonzione*, as the arrangement of time and succession has been so changed as to render them a mass of confusion, as far at least as the chronology of the events which they are meant to represent is concerned.

For instance, they celebrate the resurrection on Saturday, when the "*Gloria in excelsis*" is executed, which was very fine ; and at the moment when the *diacre* chaunts "*Ite, missa est*," and the choir respond, "*Deo gratias, alleluja*," most strikingly so.

They perform the deposition in the sepulchre on Wednesday, and all this confusion for the accommodation of the different officials, who could not otherwise, it is urged, be present at all the *funzione*. This deposition in the sepulchre is performed by placing the sacred wafer in the *capella paolina*, where daylight is excluded, to give effect to a brilliant illumination of wax candles ; and here the Romans themselves resort in great numbers, and appear to pray very devoutly.

I mention a solitary act of devotion on the part of the Romans themselves, as all the other ceremonies are monopolised by strangers, principally *heretics*, to the almost utter exclusion of the faithful. Does this require *reform* ? or is it better that it should be only a show for foreigners, with the chance of making converts ? I leave Gregory to settle the point with his confessor. It is however an abuse of long standing, as is recorded in the well-known joke of the witty tailor, Pasquino*.

"Where are you going in full dress ?" said Pasquin to Marfario : "To the

* From whose name, "*pasquinade*."

fonzione," replied the other. "You'll not be admitted." "Not admitted ! and pray why ? am I not a good christian ?" "That is the very reason, you fool ; none but heretics are admitted."

EASTER SUNDAY is by Romans considered the great day : the Pope celebrates high mass in person ; not in the cramped space of the papal chapels, but beneath the majestic dome of St. Peter's, at the central pavilion or altar of Bernini, the greatest mass of bronze in existence, mostly torn from the devoted Pantheon. The arrangement of the day's service is quite dramatic, for in addition to the fine music of the *messa cantata*, and the presence of the Santo Padre in person, scenic effect is not neglected. A sort of avenue is formed for the Pope to pass up the centre of the great nave, from the entrance to the altar, formed by the halberdiers in their quaint costumes, the Swiss guard in their half armour, and the *guardia nobile* in scarlet and gold ; producing a sort of semi-military effect, which was very imposing, and much heightened by the picturesque dresses of the pilgrims, who beyond this space, which is kept pretty clear, fill the body of the church, and form a coup-d'œil perhaps the grandest of the holy week. Among these pilgrims may be distinguished, by their respective costumes, the people of the campagna, of Nettuno, of the Regno, and of la Marqua, who come down in thousands during *la settimana santa*, to visit all the churches of Rome ; for which penance they obtain an indulgence for a certain term, besides absolution for old scores. Such advantages are not to be treated lightly, and the number of pilgrims is consequently still very great, though not equal to what it was, even after the French occupation had given a shock to the Church, from which it has never thoroughly recovered. Nevertheless these peasant pilgrims are perhaps the only true and sincere devotees of the holy week ; and their arrival in long files across the campagna is one of the grandest sights of that period.

A Rambler in the environs may see these pilgrims come down from the hills above Tivoli, winding round the mountain paths like a bas-relief upon the column of Trajan ; and in the very costume that you may see on Etruscan vases 2000 years old. Those were fastnesses that the Goths, the Fruli, the Huns, or the Lombards, never disturbed ; they were too busy pillaging the rich cities of the empire of their accumulated treasures of ages, to care for the simple cabins of the mountaineer : so that one may still see the daughters of that antique race going to the fountain with elegantly formed vessels upon their heads, so unchanged in form that he might fancy them bearing the amphoræ of wine to the plain, for the revels of an Anthony or a Cæsar. But I am wandering from St. Peter's, where, *à propos des pèlerins*, I observed a long string of Irish pilgrims, whose short noses and twinkling witty eyes, formed a singular contrast with the swarthy skins and large features of the Italian devotees.

All the seats prepared for strangers were soon filled, even to the balconies

placed in the groups of pilasters which support the dome. The gallery round the interior of the great dome itself was also full, from whence the congregated crowd beneath appeared an assembly of Liliputians in the temple of a Gulliver. The *fonzione*, despite the fine anthems and magnificent choruses, were long and tedious, and it was only once that I felt any of the effect intended to be produced: that was the moment when, in the midst of profound silence, the Pope elevates the sacred *hostie*. It was an impressive moment; but the flippant conversation in familiar accents going on around me, very soon dissolved the spell. My attention in fact was so much called off by the pretty tattle of young ladies, the *bon mots* of young gentlemen, or profound observations about the expected girandola ball, or the marriage of Prince B., that I was glad when the procession commenced, and I might safely say I had seen all. At which juncture I made haste out to secure a good place for the *benedizione*.

The mass finished, Gregorio was assisted into his *palanquin*, and beneath a red canopy supported above him by gorgeously dressed officials, was carried down the avenue, preceded by cardinals, deacons, bishops, and prelati, without number; and thus proceeded by the interior galleries to the balcony, whence he bestows the solemn benediction.

No sooner had his Holiness passed, than the rush towards the doors became more universal than decorous; it was quite sufficient to occupy my entire attention, in order to keep upon my legs; in fact I was carried; and found myself standing upon the top of the great flight of steps in front of St. Peter's, I scarcely know how. It was a brilliant day, and the scene now so suddenly spread before me was surpassingly beautiful: for a moment I held my breath, for the effect was overpowering. The spacious piazza, enclosed by that superb colonnade, was completely filled; and the glitter of brilliant equipages, the varied dresses of the spectators, the rich carriages of the cardinals, (something like our sheriffs' coaches) the lace covered liveries of the ambassadors, the gaily coloured dresses of the women of Frascati and Albano, the armour of the Swiss guard glittering in the sun, and the sparkling trappings of all the *forestieri* who could sport a uniform, the whole relieved by that magic shower of snowy spray from the incomparable fountains, where all the hues of the iris were seen fitfully playing, formed a coup-d'œil as splendid as it was unexpected, and produced an impression which will not be easily effaced from the memory of those who witnessed it.

I never experienced a similar sensation from a similar cause, except perhaps on crossing the Jura; when the Lake of Geneva, a beautiful mirror set in the golden undulations of the rich Pays du Vaud, like a magnificent frame, with the snowy peak of the distant Mont Blanc for a background, burst upon the traveller like the magic scenery of a dream.

In the balcony, richly decorated with scarlet damask, and covered with an

immense awning, the Pope was at length placed in great state, still beneath his canopy. Some Latin forms of prayer having been gone through, he advances to the front, and majestically extending his arms, glittering with gold and gems, he is supposed to embrace and bestow his benediction upon the whole Christian world. The effect is most impressive: these are the scenes which will long preserve the power of the church of Rome in the south; for they are in sympathetic unison with the ardent imaginations of those children of the sun; and I think it may be safely asserted, that with the severe and simple forms of the Protestant church there would be far less religion among the lower classes in that country, than under the more imposing dominion of the Romish ritual.

This would seem enough *sight-seeing* for one day, but after a drive in the Villa Borghese, and an early dinner, there was still more to be done. The best part of the day's doings remained yet to be seen: it was a heavy duty after the morning's fatigue, and just after dinner one does not feel much inclined for locomotion; but, as my Frenchman said, *Quand on est à Rome il faut l'avaler*; so there was no flinching.

The magic music of the Sistina has ceased, and the dress trappings of the interior of the great cathedral, with the wreaths and garlands, have disappeared; but there is still another spectacle, which is perhaps worth a journey to Rome to behold: this is the illumination of St. Peter's. The interior illumination, imagined by Michael Angelo, which was effected by a single, but vast illuminated cross suspended from the centre of the dome, is discontinued; for it was found that, in these latter times, instead of the crowd of kneeling pilgrims who formerly filled the arena beneath this splendidly poetic image of the vision of Constantine, and of that cross from which the church declares all true light to proceed; the sanctity of the place was profaned by a crowd of lazy loungers, and what in the eyes of the church of Rome was worse than all, principally heretics; and this evil continually increasing, the custom was very properly discontinued. But though I acknowledge that this suppression, under the circumstances, was advisable, yet I cannot help wishing that it had been deferred until after my visit to Rome, even though I had been one of the lazy crowd of loungers myself. It must have been a magnificent sight to see that vast and glittering fane thus illuminated from one grand focus; its towering vault bathed in a blaze of light, whilst each retiring mass along its majestic aisles received, at first, broad and massive gleams; then smaller, though perhaps more brilliant torches; and at length, except where some point of a burnished capital, or the rich offering of some favoured shrine, glittered like a star in the distance, all sunk into darkness and indefinable gloom. There must have been a mysterious and poetic beauty in the effect, not to be described by the pen. The pencil of a Martin might perhaps give some idea of the dreamy grandeur of that scene

which will be witnessed no more. The day has passed for such displays in connexion with religion ; for, to say the best of it, it was but a species of quackery, which the growing education of the age has unmasked. Our prying age has seen things *de trop près*. We have thrown open the “Holy of Holies ;” we have, in fact, stripped

“The mountain of its robe of blue ;”

and, to speak the truth, many have rushed in, mayhap fools, where the wisest and best had feared to tread. The aggregate of happiness has not yet, perhaps, been increased by these innovations, which are but the little depredations that must necessarily be committed in the grand march upon which the human race has now fairly started ; and, though the effects of the advance may appear at present doubtful, we must recollect that all is yet imperfect. We are in the state of transition, which must always have its restlessness and its struggles : like the imago, ere it can escape from the *pupa-case*, and assert that glorious liberty for which its previous stages had been but the preparation.

To return to the business of the day : although the interior illumination has been discontinued, that of the exterior and the piazza is still one of the attractions of the “*settimana santa* ;” and as the sun sunk behind the Vatican, and the short southern twilight began to deepen, I quitted my apartment ; and, to avoid the scuffling line of carriages in the Via Condotti, crossed the Tiber at Ripetta, at the hour of “*Ave Maria*,” and, passing under the fortifications of St. Angelo, approached the scene by way of the Porta Angelica, at the back of the great palace.

As the dusk of evening increased, the lamps which traced out every line of the architecture of St. Peter’s began to twinkle upon the vast dome, now growing dim and blue in the midst of evening ; and as they assumed, as nearly as possible, the same tint as the last streaks of day that yet lingered behind, they produced a singularly beautiful effect ; each lamp seeming a perforation through which the sun-set gleams were seen, giving the mass a lace-like lightness, which under no other circumstances it could have assumed. But this effect could only be witnessed from the direction in which I had approached, which threw the peculiar light which succeeds sun-set immediately behind the building. I slowly quitted this interesting picture ; and passing through the dark arch of the Porta Angelica, entered the *Rione di Borgo* (the quarter of Rome in which the Vatican and the great Basilica are situated), and soon found myself in the midst of the Piazza di San Pietro, already crowded with carriages, spectators, and lemonade purveyors ; for it had been a sultry April day, of which, in Rome, I felt many as hot as any that occur with us in the height of July and August. The colonnade round the piazza was also lighted, but merely by simple rows of lamps along each prominent moulding, and round each base and capital of its

forest of Tuscan columns. This simple architectural illumination has an effect of grandeur in the mass which we can scarcely conceive from the specimens of British illuminations which we have seen; the most splendid of which, from the nature of the various devices employed, destroy the grandeur, form, and magnitude of the buildings they are intended to embellish. They are certainly very brilliant, with their profusion of coloured lamps; but their V.A.s, laurel wreaths, British lions, cornucopiæ, stars, and crowns, would effectually cut up the finest architecture in the world; and, though the effect may be glaring, even brilliant, a line of street so illuminated could never stand a comparison with one illuminated in accordance with its architectural forms. I never saw St. Peter's to such advantage as on this night, and I never saw the public buildings of London to such disadvantage as when spotted with their crowns and stars, and initials of coloured lamps.

As I stood considering St. Peter's, although I could not but admire the excellent taste of the plan of its illumination, yet I must confess that the *brilliancy* of the effect was not exactly what I had expected, and I became anxious for the darkness to close in, imagining that the effect would be thereby increased; for neither the number nor the effect of the lights equalled my expectations, although their disposition was so good. While thus engaged, it occurred to me (as I had been informed), that the illumination was effected *all at once*, at a preconcerted moment; and I was at a loss to imagine how the deep paper lamps, with a light at the bottom, could have been thus simultaneously ignited; or why, if so, the *coup* had been performed so soon, and before it could produce any great effect. I now discovered, upon inquiry and closer examination, that such had not been the case, and that, in point of fact, the present lighting was a mere *ébauche*, or sketch, a slight outline of the highly-wrought effect which was to follow, at the second hour of night; that is to say, two hours after sun-set. This information gave me ample time to move from point to point, as far as the crowded state of the Piazza would allow me, and watch the preparations. I found that in front of each statue, on the top of the circular colonnade, a vase of some inflammable material was placed; whilst behind each of these grim Saints of stone stood a little imp, match in hand, ready, upon the concerted signal, to set all in a blaze. The same plan was observed with regard to the columns, with the exception that the lights were placed behind; so that, when all was lighted, in front of a brilliant background, the column would appear dark as a mass of the blackest marble, supporting the cornice and statues in vivid light. The same effects of *chiar-oscuro* were, I found, being observed in the *façade* of the main building, and on the dome. I was informed (for of course I could not see), that the centres and corners of the different compartments of the dome were marked by similar pots of combustibles, whilst the lines of moulding

were marked by smaller ones, ignited by a train; and the effect produced with the pillars of the colonnade was to be repeated in the great gallery; the whole to be simultaneously fired at the grand signal. This is the manner in which I should like to see such a street as our Regent Street illuminated upon some great occasion, as the style of the buildings would afford ample opportunity for a similar display; and, if the present rapid progress of street architecture continues, every principal line will soon afford equal, if not superior advantages: but, for the present system of illumination, the old dingy brick affords just as good, if not a better background*.

The Piazza became at length completely jammed with carriages; and, as the clocks of Rome at last struck, in every variety of tone of which bell-metal is capable, the wished-for second hour of night, all eyes were turned, as with one impulse, to the great point of attraction. A brilliant light issued, as it were, from the great ball, and describing a dazzling circle, settled upon the highest point of the enormous cross. This was the signal. In a moment, lights flashed from every part, playing like meteors round the vast cupola, and setting, as by magic, each in its proper place: it was but a breath, and the illumination was complete; one which I do not hesitate to say, was the finest *coup d'effet* I ever witnessed: the first burst was truly astounding.

I lingered long upon the spot, where the unvarying splash of the great fountains, in whose spray the lights were reflected in showers of fiery spangles, formed a fine and hushing accompaniment to the busy sounds of the dispersing crowd. As it grew late, I strolled to the Ponte Sisto, to get the *ensemble* more complete, and was not disappointed in the effect. From Ripetta I had it again, but more distant; and my last glimpse was from the elevated point of the Trinita de' Monte, whence, though rather subdued, it had a fine effect; rising like some castle of enchantment beyond the now dark outlines of the quiet palaces of Rome.

I had now seen enough of the ceremonies of Easter Day to satisfy the utmost cravings of curiosity, and I preferred the two *external* displays, which all Rome could witness, to all the exclusive doings of the Pope, Cardinals, and Bishops in the interior; to obtain a sight of which, there was so much pushing and crowding, and such difficulty of seeing to any advantage. However, I could now boldly meet my Frenchman, and say I had "*avalé tout*."

So terminated the ceremonies of the holy week, which I may perhaps have described in too light a strain, considering that their origin and intention is of the most solemn nature. But they have so departed from the meaning and character

* In the recent illuminations in London, the Travellers' Club formed an almost solitary exception to these remarks; and though not very effective, was still an approach to that style of illumination which may be termed architectural.

of the original institutions of which they are the distorted representatives, that ridicule seems occasionally scarcely out of place in their consideration. Even if it be deemed advisable to resort to such means for awing the vulgar to a sense of religion, these *fonzione* surely require revision and improvement, in order at all events to restore their meaning, and their connexion with the events and mysteries they affect to represent.

EASTER MONDAY : LA GIRANDOLA.—The Girandola is, as is well known, a grand display of fireworks from the Castle of St. Angelo, and as all the points from which a good view can be obtained are confined in space, the smash of carriages, the alarm of pedestrians, and elbowing of ribs, are very considerable on that occasion ; besides which, the privileged carriages and loges upon the bridge, completely obstruct the view of the less fortunate unprivileged, in the rear. There was a good view to be had from the backs of some of the houses next the river, but the places were let at extravagant prices, and all secured before the day. The back of the *teatro Apollo*, belonging to the rich banker Torlonia, also commands a view of the scene ; and he had invited almost every foreigner of respectability to a ball given on the occasion ; but not a quarter of those invited could possibly crowd into the balconies, and those in the rooms could of course see nothing. These and other circumstances determined me to witness the display from the Tiber. I accordingly engaged with the ferryman at *Ripetta* to take me in front of the castle, in a little boat, or rather cockle-shell, whose rickety construction would make a London waterman exclaim, in select terms of wonder, such as I need not suggest to the reader.

This Tiber must look with some contempt upon the present doings on its banks and stream, and yet there are many things still the same. The mountains of Tusculum still throw at evening their blue shadows over its yellow tide ; fragments of its ancient bridges still remain ; and the great Cloaca still opens its unbroken arch upon its border.

As the evening became dark, we stepped into our little bark, and were soon eddying and curling about at the will of the rapid current ; for our rowers, the ferryman and his two boys, had little management of the boat. It is fair to add, however, that she was a craft which would have defied the efforts of much more scientific hands ; and so long as we eventually got to the point of our destination, it was all we desired.

As I floated about that dark night, I felt more at Rome than I had ever done before : there is a strength of association about the classic stream that is not to be met with even in the mighty Colosseum ; and that feeling becomes stronger when all else is shut out by darkness, and one feels oneself alone, at night, upon its troubled surface. I could not help reflecting, with De Staël, in the words of her eloquent cicerone, Corinne, “que c’est un des plaisirs de Rome que de dire, ‘allons au Tibre, traversons le Tibre.’”

I had plenty of time for the like reveries, for the second hour of night passed ere the cannon announced the first grand bouquet of rockets from the castle. At last, up it sprung—one vast trunk of light, spreading at length, at an immense height, into innumerable branches, and falling in golden showers, forming, as it were, a vast palm-tree of fire; or, as it shot from the dark summit of the castle, you might fancy it the sudden eruption of a volcano; and, straining a point in favour of the picturesque, make the Tiber the bay of Naples, and the dusky form of the castle the neighbouring Vesuvius. After the first burst, the display of fire was very inferior to many things I have seen, and appeared to me to be badly managed. The boatmen told me it was nothing to the display made the previous year, when the king of Naples was present; and old Suor Rosa, my landlady, upon my return, condolingly assured me, that I had *veduto niente*, and that, in comparison to what she had seen, the whole affair was a mere *porcheria*.

There are many other religious fêtes in Rome worthy of attention, particularly those about Christmas, which the Romans themselves enjoy much, as they are in some degree connected with the feasting of that season—a Catholic practice which we still maintain with much zest in Protestant England. It is at this season that the *pifferi*, or calabrian minstrels, come down from the mountains with their bagpipes, forming those picturesque groups before the portraits of the Virgin with which we are so familiar in the pictures of all artists who have studied in Italy, with whom the subject has always been a favourite.

At Santa Maria Maggiore, their greatest relic is the Bethlehem cradle—the *santa culla*, in honour of which a grand midnight service is performed, at which the illuminations are very splendid, and the music exceedingly fine. It is a fête much sought by strangers; who generally occupy the whole of the choir, to the utter exclusion of good Catholics. After the music, the cradle is carried in grand procession round the aisles of this beautiful Basilica; but the original shrine of silver, with which it was once encased, is gone: the French carried away the casket, but, like good Catholics, did not touch the cradle: they piously left it to the church.

Another fête is that of the chair of St. Peter—*la festa della cattedra*, held with great pomp, in St. Peter's, where a chair is preserved, said to be the episcopal chair used by St. Peter, as Bishop of Rome. It was enclosed in the altar of the great nave, and never exhibited but for a moment during the fête. But there was a story told in Rome, and repeated by tourists, to the effect that the prying French sacrilegiously drew forth the chair, and, examining it with antiquarian zeal and curiosity, discovered an Arabic inscription, which, being translated, stands thus—"There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet*." This was a sad blow to the orthodoxy of the chair of St. Peter; but the story is now forgotten, and the fête proceeds as usual.

* It was probably a chair brought from the Holy Land by some of the Crusaders, which would account for the inscription.

Candlemas is a remarkable season, and a wholesale blessing of candles the n takes place in all the churches; the formula of which, beginning, "Domine Jesu benedictus obsecro hanc creaturum ceream," &c. &c. is one of the superstitious rites which most disgrace the Romish Church. But a more singular ceremony, and one which has at least the advantage of the picturesque, is the benediction of animals*, on the fête of St. Anthony; whose miracles, in his dealings with quadrupeds, form one of the most curious of the catholic legends. The facilities, which, it appears, were at all times at the command of the good Anthony, procured him the title of Patron Saint of Animals; and on his fête-day, whole droves are brought to the convent near Santa Maria Maggiore to receive a benediction in his name, which is supposed to protect them from disease for the next year†. The exhibition is highly characteristic: the horses of the Pope, richly caparisoned, and those of the Cardinals, form very fine groups, as they are led to the ancient door of the convent.‡ But they are, perhaps, surpassed by those of the peasantry, which their proprietors bring decked out in holiday fashion; and their own various costume, from the different Appenine towns above the Campagna, add to the picturesque effect. Altogether, the scene would form a fine subject for a picture; and I am astonished that neither Horace Vernet, nor any of our English artists who have visited Rome, have availed themselves of a scene so interesting.

The Pope himself assists at but few of these mummeries, and the impressive function of the herald at his coronation, who, holding a piece of burning flax, exclaiming, as it quickly consumes, "Sancti Pater! sic transit gloria mundi," seems to impress its influence, in some degree, on his after-doings; for the private devotions of the Popes, in the chapel of the Quirinal, are entirely divested of pomp—no gaudy ornaments decorate the simple white and gold of this modest chapel. There is no crucifix, and its usual place is only marked by a plain cross of silver. But the populace of the south would not find their ardent imaginations satisfied with this simplicity; they must have both mystery and splendour.

Having seen all these things, one would imagine that I had seen quite sufficient to form a very fair idea of Romish ceremonial in general; but there is a grand procession of the clergy yet to come, and the procession of the Corpus Christi, when the arrazzi of Raphael are hung round the great colonnade of St. Peter's, which I must absolutely remain to witness, lest some more patient sight-hunter should good-naturedly insist that I have lost *le plus beau*. Besides, *Quand on est à Rome*, as my French acquaintance declared, *il faut avaler tout*.

* A representation of this scene is given in one of the tablets of the title page, from a sketch taken on the spot, by the author of these Promenades.

† Formula.—Per intercessionem beati Antonii Abates hac animalia liberantur a malis in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sanctus, Amen.

‡ See vignette in frontispiece.

THE END.

